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of the
NEW TESTAMENT

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SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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SOCIAL MESSAGE *of the* NEW TESTAMENT

By

H. SCHUMACHER, D.D.

Professor of New Testament Scripture

Author of a *Handbook of Scripture Study*, etc.



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To the
Fathers of the Precious Blood
at
Carthagen, Ohio
In Grateful Remembrance of Their Kindly
Interest and Hospitality
While This Book Was Being Written

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

For many years Dr. Schumacher has been known as a foremost Scripture scholar. The present book, however, is not written for any special group. It is universal in its appeal. The message it conveys is for all men. Its method of treatment, while scientific, is popular, simple, and within the ready comprehension of all. It is a book for the many no less than for the few.

Too little thought has hitherto been devoted to the subject here treated, although nothing could well be more important. Society today is lacking above all in spiritual vitality. It needs the dynamic message of the New Testament to urge it into action.

Our most enlightened thinkers daily realize more profoundly — and all history bears out their contention — that a culture whose spiritual life is dying or extinct already carries within it the seed of its own corruption. It matters not how prosperous it may outwardly appear. The apple ruddiest to the eye is, proverbially, the one that bears the deadly canker at its core. The great nations of the world went down to ruin at the height of their own material display and sensuous enjoyment. They became as St. Paul found the pagans of his day to be: hard, cruel, without pity, given to the lusts of the flesh. In our reconstruction of the social order the most essential element is not the choice of systems and techniques, but the religious factor. The sooner our modern nations will learn this truth, the closer they will find themselves to the realization of their dreams for world betterment, world peace, social and domestic happiness.

Through the course of many years the author has revolved in his mind the subject of this book. Other volumes dealing

Preface by the General Editor

with this question have appeared from various non-Catholic sources, and due reference is made to them. Yet something different was needed. Theological commentaries could not answer the purpose; nor Scripture studies expanded into sociological essays, good though they might be. But what was supremely needed was a brief, clear, authentic exposition of the Scripture passages in the New Testament bearing on the social question. Thoughtfully gathered, scientifically grouped, and systematically built into a constructive message, these passages, with their authentic exposition, could then be presented to Catholic and non-Catholic alike, as the complete social ideal of the New Testament. That is the task the author set himself; that is the work he accomplished.

Fundamental for the author's treatment are the tremendous and far-reaching social implications contained in the "Our Father," establishing the only possible basis for any brotherhood of man. Of widest application also, embracing all who are one in Christ, no matter of what race or color or state of life under the sun, is the beautiful doctrine of the Mystical Body, of the Vine and its branches. With these divine truths for foundation and keystone the writer assembles the many social passages of the New Testament and unites them into an organized whole.

But more fully to understand the plan of his book attention should be called to its dual development: the first section offering the social doctrine of Christ Himself; the second presenting the teaching of the Apostles on the selfsame theme. This apparent duplication is an effective device to refute without further argument the error prevalent in radical and rationalistic circles, that the social doctrine of the Master was distorted by His disciples. We here behold instead how in constantly new ways and in richly varied thoughts and imagery the Apostles incessantly reaffirm and amplify the teachings of their Master.

That the very existence even of a social message in the Old or the New Testament should ever have been questioned

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by anyone is a matter that calls for wonderment rather than argument.

Social precepts and social principles are enunciated in Holy Writ with a vigor and beauty of language that can be found equaled nowhere else in all literature, as when St. James utters his classic woe to the rich who have defrauded the poor man of his hire; or St. John denounces as a murderer the man who hates his brother; or St. Paul cleaves straight to the hidden cause of all our social ills as he writes those memorable words: "For the desire of money is the root of all evils" (1 Tim. 6:10). But it was for our Divine Lord Himself to give us the most wonderful parables and lessons that capture the intelligence and grip the hearts of men.

Of the sayings recorded from the lips of our Lord it is estimated that about one half are social in their character. Of His two great commandments, on which "dependeth the whole law and the prophets," the first is personal and pertains to our love of God above all things, but the second is social: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39).

In the sublimely dramatic scene of the Last Judgment, pictured by Christ, the only test mentioned as determining our final sentence is the service rendered our neighbor in his need. "Amen I say to you," are the words of the Divine Judge, "as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me." In the Ten Commandments, inscribed upon the two stone tables of the law amid the thunders of Mount Sinai, the first three concern directly our personal duties to God, but the remaining seven are social, looking toward the proper fulfillment of domestic, marital, civic, and property relations.

These are a few signal facts to indicate the importance of the social question in the light of Divine Revelation. Directly or indirectly they impress us with the sanctions God attaches to the full observance of the laws of Christian charity and social justice. They are a few of the numerous passages quoted by the author in detailed substantiation of the social message written in the New Testament Scriptures, which is for all

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time, and not meant to be an itemized political or industrial program for just a single age or day. It is concerned with religion and morality. It contains in itself dynamic power sufficient—and that is the author's real thesis—to revolutionize and renew after the heart of God our entire social and economic order. It is a message for men of good will to take up and to spread that it may enkindle the world.

JOSEPH HUSSLEIN, S.J., PH.D.,
General Editor, Religion and Culture Series

St. Louis University,
December 7, 1936

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The chief object of this book is to collect and arrange systematically the social principles of Christ's teaching which should inspire and govern any modern social order as they inspired human society under most adverse circumstances in the beginning of the Christian era.

My reason for undertaking this task is simply that, in spite of the amount of Catholic literature on the subject in general, no Catholic work of precisely this type and purpose exists in our language. Non-Catholic books of this kind are rather numerous, but because of the incomplete and incorrect views concerning Christ and His work of Redemption, too often found in them, they are unable to offer an adequate evaluation of the deepest Christian principles affecting the social question.

The present volume may prove of value to various classes of readers. Naturally, it is written first of all for Catholics themselves, at a time when the call of the Holy Father for "Catholic Action" has gone forth to the world, and when in Catholic congresses, Catholic assemblies, and Catholic literature the same call is continuously repeated. The author's purpose is to point out the fundamental principles of New Testament teaching which Catholics shall therefore have to translate into action, if they would answer this appeal. Simply to emphasize the fact that the social problem is a moral question will not suffice. "Morals" can be understood as meaning "secular morals" only, and in that sense certain conservative Socialists accept the word. "Christian morals" imply more. They include the dictates of supernatural revelation.

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It is hoped, however, that the book will be helpful as well to non-Catholics, whether Christians or not, who believe that the founder of Christianity has something of value to offer to the desperate people of a world that is still nominally Christian. To those who do not accept Christ's authority at all, it will at least show that a society ruled by His principles would constitute a fairly good world to live in, even should they call such a society a fantastic impossibility.

But it must not be expected that we shall here attempt to list — as some curious minds are inclined to demand — all the innumerable social problems of the time, quoting for each case the socio-economic solution out of the New Testament. This would imply the absurd hypothesis that the New Testament represents some kind of casuistic sociological textbook, with explicit reference to every possible future social difficulty. As the Abbé Garriguet says: "The elements of a complete didactic course of sociology must not be sought for in the Gospel."*

And yet it remains true that Christ, by His Redemption, example, and teaching, offered principles which, directly or indirectly, are applicable to any social question of whatsoever time.

Today the majority of Biblical scholars will readily admit that the teaching of the New Testament is both religious and social. While the religious purpose is the primary factor, the social principles involved in it should not be overlooked. To present these principles in systematic order is the purpose of the following pages. The texts of the New Testament are quoted literally (according to the traditional Douay Version) in order to allow the unique power of the words of Christ and the Apostles to make their appeal directly to the mind of the reader. Technical exegetical controversies are intentionally avoided.

Since the aim of this book is no other than to bring out the social principles of the New Testament, other topics,

* *The Gospel and Our Social Problems*, 1925, p. 44.

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attractive as they might be in themselves, have necessarily been dismissed. Such questions as might elsewhere call for special treatment are the social teachings of the Old Testament and an inquiry into their influence on the New; the relationship or nonrelationship between the social system of the Essenes and the teaching of Christ; the social conditions of the Greco-Roman Empire and their reaction on the teachings of the New Testament; and finally, the various opinions and schools during the past hundred years concerning the social teaching of the Saviour. Nor does the book intend to be apologetic in the sense that it would enter into controversies with socialistic or communistic systems. It purports only to present the positive teaching of Christ and the Apostles in social matters, and to offer indirectly thereby the most objective social *apologia* of Christianity.

It seemed advisable to separate the teaching of the Gospel from that of the Apostolic Age, since some non-Catholics maintain emphatically that the latter abandoned Christ's teaching. The impressive documentation of the apostolic teaching offered here in juxtaposition to the teaching of Christ will show clearly that the primitive church, although amplifying the ideals of Jesus, reiterated energetically the social commands of the Master.

I gratefully take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness to my friends: to the Rev. Dr. L. Motry of the Catholic University of America with whom I discussed the subject matter of this study for years; to the Rev. Dr. E. Kaiser of St. Charles Seminary in Carthage for many helpful hints, for his valuable assistance in the preparation of the manuscript for the printer, and his generous aid in reading the proofs; to the Rev. Dr. A. Dirksen of the same Seminary for many important suggestions and his unfailing assistance in procuring the necessary literature; to St. Charles Seminary under whose friendly roof the greater part of the book was written and finally to the Rev. Dr. Joseph Husslein, S.J., of St. Louis University, the General Editor of the

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H. S.

Gardenville, N. Y.
Christmas, 1936

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PART ONE

THE SOCIAL MESSAGE OF CHRIST

CHAPTER I

FOUNDATION OF THE NEW CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ORDER

The cry that goes forth today through the suffering Western World, that arises from the lips of Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and even from the troubled hearts of those who have forgotten what Christianity really means is: "Let society return to Christ." Certainly, there are signs of a Christian awakening. Old, half-forgotten memories are stirring in the hearts of millions, and it is as if our ears were catching the echo of those words of the prodigal son: "I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee'" (Luke 15:18). Not only Capitalism and Industrialism, but also radical representatives of labor today, stand convicted before humanity of having fatally wounded the fundamental life principles of society. But to call this "social awakening" an accomplished fact that "will move with the slow tread of great historic events,"¹ * is a manifestation of too great an optimism for anyone who refuses to believe in Utopias. Warmly as this cry for Christ is to be welcomed as a sign that mankind yearns for sounder principles, it is still nothing more than a desperate confession of helplessness, not the firm determination to use the true remedy at every cost. The situation is only rendered more desperate by the many offers of aid, for the hands stretched out to the multitudes struggling in the "Flood" are not always helping hands.

Of what avail to humanity is it if the majority of writers

* The numbered references appear on pages 217 to 221.

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offer to the multitudes, hungry for salvation, a "stone" for "bread" and a "serpent" for "fish" (Matt. 7:9,10)? What avails it if they offer to the miserable an empty concept of Christ and Christian society which ultimately does not satisfy, although it might offer transitory and temporary consolation? Of what profit to men are lofty, encouraging words spoken in the name of Christ, if that Christ be not the eternal God, and His message not the message of Eternity, but merely the word of a sublime religious leader, to be accepted by those who find it comforting to disappointed sentiments, and rejected by those whose greed it rebukes? What does it profit them to receive in the name of Christ, as solace in their struggle, the sad and solemn assurance that their earthly career of sorrow is the end and fulfillment of life's task? How true is it of many present-day non-Catholic elucubrations that, "they water down religion to a series of moral platitudes and then dignify this mixture of vague religiosity and well-meaning moral optimism with the respectable name of Christianity!"² The multitude of books of such tendency will never bring to society effective or lasting help in its difficulties.

Again, what assistance can be offered to society by a Christ, who, despite the charm of some of His utterances, is held to be "lacking in specific counsel"? Thus Shailer Mathews insists: "Yet, lacking in such counsel He is. Our age is industrial; His was agricultural and commercial. Today women have the rights of persons; in His day they were under the control of father or husband. We enjoy—and endure—democracy, the sovereignty of the people; in the days of Jesus such a political conception was not even dreamed. We are aware of social processes and inquisitive as to the influences operative in human life; Jesus believed that history was to end and a new era begin by the interposition of God. Such contrasts make specific directions impracticable."³

We freely concede that the age of the machine is different from the age of the craftsman, but it is nevertheless true

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that the operator of the machine in our time is as much a human being and as subject to ethical and spiritual principles as was the man at the plough at the time of Jesus. We do not read in the Gospel that Christ gave instructions about methods of agriculture in His time; nor would He be concerned with the production of a factory in our days. But He is concerned with the ethical and religious forces that should control men of all times. And yet there is only one hope for an effective reform of society, the hope in Christ: "For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

For this reason, Pius XI issues the emphatic warning: "Social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit." No volumes on capital, industrialism, property, family, labor, wages, and state will restore the lacerated social fabric, unless all efforts are made to imbue the individuals of our human society with the Christian spirit. So long as the body of human society is not revived by Christian social principles the numerous materialistic experiments in our social reconstruction will be as useless as an operation on a lifeless body. The first task is to restore life to the corpse; the second to operate with the co-operation of life. "Christianizing" society is the primary need of the hour.

But this process cannot be effected in the way Shailer Mathews suggests: "The fact that He [Christ] refused to adjust His teachings to the civilization of His own day makes it all the more necessary for His modern followers to make the adjustment to our present situation. The real test of the vitality of a movement is precisely at the point where it attempts to adjust the ideals of the past to the conditions in the present."⁴ This well-meant counsel reverses the order and increases the chaos. If Christ is to be the regenerating force in our time, He can be effective only if His precepts are considered peremptory laws and categoric imperatives which do not suffer compromise. The burden of adjustment lies upon us in the sense that we must reform our attitudes

Social Message of the New Testament

and actions, and thereby shape our present situation according to the timeless and unchangeable law of Christ, who has "the words of eternal life" (John 6:69).

Nor will the mission of "Christianizing" society be successful if, on the one hand, the highest terms of praise are bestowed on Jesus as the "unique revelation of God, the unfolding of the divine life under human forms, the ultimate standard of moral and spiritual life, the perfect expression of the will of God for humanity, the categorical imperative with a human heart,"⁵ and, on the other hand, disdain is shown toward that "other-world hope," so emphatically preached by Christ; if it is looked upon as an element destructive of the earthly social hope of mankind because "the desire for rest in heaven is not the social hope of the reign of God on earth with which Christianity set out."⁶ By tearing the Gospel of Christ to shreds, such a social teaching deprives the Christian member of society of the most precious consolations in his sorrows and destroys the only comforting hope that imparts to thousands the strength to bear the trials of life. If we sincerely intend to accept Christ and His Gospel as the model according to which society has to shape itself before it can recover from its illness, we have to take both as they are without any mutilation. To show the struggling world *half* of Christ and *half* of His Gospel, no matter how sincere the intention, cannot be a sound and salutary method of "Christianizing" society.

The deplorable method of distorting and abusing the Gospel results in the almost ludicrous claim of nearly all modern social movements that Christ is their ideal and sanction. Not seldom Socialists and other radicals, no less than true Christian social associations would claim Christ for their banner. Such incredible mockery of Christianity, presenting itself so often in most pious garb, is due either to the misinterpretation or the misunderstanding of Christ's sayings. Frensen declared that German Protestant critics had liberated Christ from the chains with which, according to his opinion, an old tradition

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had bound Him. But in the shadow of this "emancipated" and denatured Christ suffering humanity did not and could not find redemption, as we all realize today. Only the true Christ of the Gospel who once raised the dead to life can restore health to a civilization wrestling with death.

But even if the attempt at uniting Christ and Society should meet with rather widespread success, only childlike optimism would expect a regeneration of humanity throughout all the members of its body. It is evident from the Gospel narrative of the life of Christ that certain types of society and Christ cannot exist together. The Judas type in humanity with its traitor spirit, or the Herod type of mockery of religion, or the Pilate type of religious cowardice, or the Pharisee type of abominable dishonesty—all these are eternally irreconcilable with the ideas of Christ.

When we speak of Christ's "social Gospel," we do not mean to imply that Jesus enunciated a systematic program for all the detailed needs of human society, although it has rightly been said regarding the great proclamations of the Sermon on the Mount: "That which moves the present world in the form of the social question is nothing but the question whether the eight Beatitudes of Jesus Christ are still of value in this world, or whether we must prefer that which unbelief preaches as beatitude, especially to the laborer." Yet, Christ in His Incarnation, His example, and His preaching offers a message to human society such as the world has never heard before. To unfold this message and to bring it home to those of "good will" is the purpose of these pages. Controversies and technicalities of interpretation are purposely avoided.

1. THE REDEMPTION AND ITS SOCIAL MESSAGE — "THE NEW LIFE"

We must take Christ exactly as the documents of revelation present Him, or else His demands, the proclamation of His life's purpose and His teaching, are manifestations of sheer insanity. How can a mere man suddenly confront the world

Social Message of the New Testament

Christ's Kingdom

with the most solemn proclamation: "The time is accomplished, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15)? It is *His* Gospel for which He demands belief. He is the founder of the Kingdom, and His preaching implies: "I shall found and I am now founding a new Kingdom, such as the world has never seen." And His message goes out, not to a limited group in Palestine, but to the whole world, according to His final command: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

The character of His Kingdom and the conditions He lays down for membership in it are new and unheard of in all the world's history. He postulates with majestic authority: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the *Kingdom* of God" (John 3:3). Here by the use of the word *Kingdom* in His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus made it clear that the mysterious vision of the prophet Daniel was fulfilled: "I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the Ancient of days; and they presented Him before Him. And He gave Him power, and glory, and a *Kingdom*: and all people, tribes and tongues shall serve Him; His power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away; and His *Kingdom* shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13,14). Next to the *Proto-Evangelium*, pronounced over the ruins of Paradise (Gen. 3:15), this is the most dramatic and momentous announcement of the Saviour and His Kingdom. The seat of God, the "Clouds of heaven," is His seat — He is *equal to God*. "All peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him" — He is the *universal Saviour-God* to whom every member of human society is subject.⁸

When Simeon took the Child Jesus in his arms, he realized the fulfillment of the venerable prophecy of old and exclaimed: "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace. Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the *gentiles*, and the

Foundation of the New Christian Social Order

glory of Thy people, Israel" (Luke 2:29-32). The Saviour, as Simeon saw Him, embraced, like the "Son of Man" in the vision of Daniel, the totality of human society. Far beyond the narrow hope of those who expected a Saviour for a small section of humanity, the Jews only, the Saviour of prophecy and divine vision extends His scepter over the whole globe, over all the peoples on earth. Jesus realized the universality of His Kingdom: "I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 8:11).

Christ's task is generally indicated and described by His name, "Jesus," meaning "Saviour." "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). He was the realization of a hope that animated and inspired the Israelites for thousands of years. Whatever the object of this hope might have been in detail—according to the word of the Angel it was the liberation from "sins"—it is all included in that one word of joy and happiness, *soteria* (salvation). Its revolutionizing force for humanity will be brought out in the course of this treatise.

Jesus
"Saviour"

Let us first answer a question on which our entire inquiry depends: "What was the most significant, the essential accomplishment of Christ's Incarnation and lifework?" The answer is amazing: "It was *the Creation of a new human society with a new and supernatural life.*" Our modern may object that after Christ the world was made up of the same kind of human beings as before, and there is no evidence of a new society of men. To this we answer that, externally, human society is composed of the same kind of men and women as before, but insofar as they became true members of the Christian society they are inwardly transformed, and, if we can believe the astonishing documents of early Christianity, the internal transformation produced marvelous external fruits. It may also be objected that this would mean that Christ created a new society of an outspokenly religious character, whereas the modern concept of society has nothing

A New
Society

Social Message of the New Testament

to do with religion. But here we assert that Christ really intended to impart to the new human society a religious character.

That humanity must be fundamentally renewed and transformed in order to form this Christian society is clearly expressed in the words of Christ, mentioned above, which categorically demand a rebirth: "Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3). St. Paul enkindles this thought with the fire of his own incomparable enthusiasm. In the Epistle to the Ephesians he says that Christ came to break down "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, in order to "make the two in Himself into one *new man*" (Eph. 2:14,15). In the same sense he writes to the Galatians: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new *creature*" (Gal. 6:15). But even more beautiful and sublime is the description of the members of the new society found in the second Epistle to the Corinthians: "If then any be in Christ a *new creature*, the old things are passed away, behold all things are made new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

A New
Man

The new era is most vividly described in all those passages in which the "old" and "new" man are placed in contrast, as in Colossians (3:9,10): "Lie not one to another: *stripping* yourselves of the *old man* with his *deeds*, and putting on the *new*, him who is renewed unto knowledge according to the image of Him that created him." It is very clearly pointed out that the new and transformed man should manifest his new state also by new deeds. This new ethical quality and duty of man is also emphasized in Romans (6:4), where the Christians are exhorted to "walk in *newness* of life," and in Romans (12:2): "Be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the *newness* of your mind, that you prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God." The whole attitude and mentality of a Christian is something *new*: "Be *renewed* in the spirit of your mind, and put on the

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new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4:23,24).

All these remarkable and sublime ideas, transcending anything ever uttered in the history of religions, are not an invention of St. Paul but a logical continuation and development of the unique and mysterious thought of "rebirth" on which Jesus insists so emphatically in His discourse with Nicodemus. What Christ Himself calls "rebirth," the Apostle describes as a "new creation." The fundamental idea is the same, namely, that "becoming Christian" means an entirely new order of life. This is the "grand miracle of the New Testament religion of Redemption which nowhere finds its equal."⁹ The intrinsic character of this new stage is designated by Christ Himself as "life": "I am come that they may have life and may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

This central thought of the preaching of Christ pervades all the writings of St. John, who emphasizes it unceasingly. Some passages transport us to the shores of the other world where we breathe the air of the eternal life which will be ours, while others bring the other world to us and transplant eternity to our present earthly life. Thus we read: "God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John 3:16). And again: "I say unto you, that he who heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath life everlasting, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life" (John 5:24); "He that believeth in the Son, hath life everlasting" (John 3:36); "He that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live" (John 11:25); "If any man keep My word, he shall not see death forever" (John 8:51); "The water that I will give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting" (John 4:14). The preaching of the disciple echoes the words of power spoken by the Master: "This is the testimony, that God hath given to us eternal life. And this life is in His Son.

The
Christian
Life

Social Message of the New Testament

He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son hath not life" (1 John 5:11,12); "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14); "God hath sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we may live by Him" (1 John 4:9). Also the Apostle James re-echoes this wonderful praise of Christian "life," when he says: "Of His own will hath He begotten us by the word of truth" (James 1:18).

For St. Paul "Christianity" and "Life" seem to be almost identical concepts: "Present yourself to God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of justice unto God" (Rom. 6:13). "So do you also reckon that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:11). "God . . . even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us (made us alive) together in Christ" (Eph. 2:5). With deepest penetration into the mind of Christ, the Apostle of the Gentiles reveals the full meaning of this life in his sublime doctrine of the "mystical body of Christ."

In His discourse to the disciples after the Last Supper, Jesus proclaims with beautiful imagery the marvelous truth of the most intimate unity of the Christian and Christ: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch that beareth not fruit, He will take away, and every one that beareth fruit He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you the branches; he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither" (John 15:1-6).

This picture from the pen of St. John, so charmingly exquisite and so mystically rich, is also found in St. Paul, who vividly depicts Christianity's greatest reality, that is the incomparable union of the Christian and Christ in a new and supernatural life. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians

**Abiding
in Christ**

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(6:17), the Apostle exclaims: "He who is joined to the Lord, is one spirit" with Him. In his Epistle to the Colossians (3:10) we further read that the Christian is renewed "according to the image of Him that created him." In the Epistle to the Romans (8:29) we have the sublime assurance that man is "predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son." And, finally, in the Epistle to the Galatians (2:20), St. Paul breaks out into the jubilant confession: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." With multiple variation the thought is repeated: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21); "You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). Consistently, therefore, Christians are referred to as "spiritual" (Gal. 6:1). "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), is the conclusion of the Apostle.

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The
Mystical
Body
The climax is reached when the Apostle designates the union of all Christians with Christ as the "body of Christ": "Now you are the body of Christ and members of member" (1 Cor. 12:27); "Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. 6:15); "So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. 12:5); "We are members of His body" (Eph. 5:30); the Colossians must adhere to the "head, from which the whole body, by joints and bands being supplied with nourishment and compacted, groweth unto the increase of God" (Col. 2:19); "Doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

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From this fundamental truth St. Paul draws a most impressive conclusion regarding the attitude to be shown toward one another by the members in the new society inaugurated by Christ. If the Apostle were to return today in order to proclaim a mighty program based on Christian ideals as a corrective and remedy for the chief defects and ills of our present-day society and were to present with this program

Social Message of the New Testament

a never-failing norm, he could not improve on the celebrated passage in the first Epistle to the Corinthians; he could do no better than repeat: "As the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and in one Spirit we have all been made to drink. For the body also is not one member, but many. If the foot should say: 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say: 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were the eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him. And if they all were one member, where would be the body? But now there are many members indeed, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand: 'I need not thy help'; nor again the head to the feet: 'I have no need of you.' Yea, much more those that seem to be the more feeble members of the body are more necessary; and such as we think to be the less honorable members of the body, about these we put more abundant honor; and those that are our uncomely parts, have more abundant comeliness. But our comely parts have no need; but God has tempered the body together, giving to that which wanted the more abundant honor; that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now, you are the body of Christ and members of member. And God indeed hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors, after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretation of speeches. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all doctors? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the

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grace of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" (1 Cor. 12:12-30.)

The members or member groups of human society have often been compared with the members of the human body, of which each has its proper function in harmony with all the other members. But never has a human mind conceived the lofty idea that human society forms a union with God in a "mystical body" in which every human being has its God-willed function, by which it should work in harmony with and for the benefit of every member and for the whole society. We have only to replace in St. Paul's unique description the terms "foot," "hand," "eye," and "ear" by certain modern social terms such as "rich," "poor," "laborer," "employer," etc., to realize how aptly the message of the doctrine fits present conditions. If all who still bear the sacred name of "Christian" would put this sublime lesson into practice by true Christian living, the social problem would find an immediate solution, at least in the Christian world. And such splendid Christian example would not fail to react favorably upon our neopagan world.

Modern social literature makes much of human and social solidarity. But it ignores the fact that never was a greater gospel of solidarity preached than the gospel of the "mystical body of Christ." It is the most effective gospel of reformation, transformation, and reconstruction ever proposed to man. The solidarity of human society, the equality and value of its individual members, the merit of individual service, the duty of mutual helpfulness and assistance, the social duty of all for the common good, the submission of all to a God-willed position in life, the interdependence of all members, and most of all the dignity, supernatural obligation, and destiny of each member of society—all these fundamental factors of the problem of the social question are classically summarized in this social compendium of the doctrine of the "mystical body of Christ." "Every member of the brotherhood," as Lugan says, "is reached by the divine influence that

Social Message of the New Testament

radiates from this Word made flesh, this Head and Prototype of mankind. . . . Like a little wave of the ocean, the least grace accorded to a man awakens a more or less distant echo in all the others.”¹⁰

The Pattern for Society

The Holy Father, in his recent Apostolic Letter to the Patriarch of Lisbon, therefore makes the doctrine of the “mystical body of Christ” the basis of any social reformation. He emphasizes that by virtue of this doctrine Christians are bound by nature to help one another: “They should help one another; no member should be inactive; the individuals should give as they receive.”

The passage to the Corinthians brings to mind the words of Exodus (26:30): “Thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the pattern that was shown thee in the mount.” The pattern, as the ideal of a new human society, has been beautifully constructed for us in the Epistle of St. Paul, and to this pattern human society must conform.¹¹ Thus, there is offered to the human will the tremendous appeal of a great and glorious ideal: “And as the corruption of the will by original sin in Adam becomes a social evil by a hereditary transmission through the flesh which unites fallen humanity in the common slavery of concupiscence, so too the restoration of the will by grace in Christ is a social good which is transmitted sacramentally by the action of the spirit and unites regenerate humanity in a free spiritual society under the law of charity.”¹²

If we are still a Christian world, true to the name, we must accept the fundamental message of Christ's coming. The event, the most stupendous in human history, which we call Salvation, means in a positive sense *the creation of a new society with a new life in union with Christ*; it means that as Christians we are obliged to possess this life if we are to be useful members of His new human society. Sublime is this task, but if the terrifying power of sin works such devastation in our social life, should not the divine power help toward the accomplishment of this great task and thus

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spread blessing?¹³ And if salvation is not merely for a chosen few, but for all nations, then humanity at large must hearken to its Saviour. And though such a blessed consummation of the good seem hopeless, yet we are not without hope if those who profess to be real Christians are more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbal—in fact, true teachers and doers of the word of Christ. A small group of Apostles started the transformation of the world by their unshaken belief and strict imitation of Christ two thousand years ago. A small group of real followers of Jesus can inaugurate a similar renovation today.

2. THE SOCIAL MESSAGE OF CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

By His Incarnation Christ became a member of human society, and by His example and attitude toward the realities of human life He showed how the problems of the world are to be faced. Fundamentally these problems are ever the same, no matter how diverse the forms of life in the course of the ages, since the material world and man's spiritual nature and destiny remain essentially the same. At the end of His career Jesus emphatically announced to His disciples and through them to humanity: "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also" (John 13:15). Though these words apply directly to the act of humility which preceded them (the washing of the feet), indirectly they apply to the entire life of Christ. Although He has, in word and deed, given us instructions for our entire social behavior and clear directions regulating our attitude and actions in this earthly kingdom for the attainment of the kingdom to come, we shall at present point out only the basic aspects of His example.

Our Social
Example

A. THE POVERTY AND HUMILITY OF CHRIST. By an inexhaustible mystery of condescension, Christ in becoming man not only entered into a union with humanity in general but with the poorest and lowliest of men. This striking phenomenon is most apparent from the beginning to the end of the life

Social Message of the New Testament

Poor and Humble

of Jesus, as well as in its whole environment. In praising the grace of God for the dignity bestowed upon her, Mary, His Mother, ranks herself among the poor and humble: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble; He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away" (Luke 1:52,53). Joseph, His foster-father, belonged to the poor class of carpenters; Christ's countrymen exclaim in wonder: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55.) His birth is surrounded by poverty: "She . . . laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). Poor shepherds are the first to greet the child (Luke 2:15). At the presentation in the temple His parents offer the sacrifice of the poor, "a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons" (Luke 2:24). When a "certain scribe" expresses a readiness to follow Him, Christ points to this same poverty: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head" (Matt. 8:20). His Apostles were of the poor, being mostly fishermen (Matt. 4:18). St. John shows Him in the service of humility, washing the feet of His disciples: "He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded" (John 13:5). He identifies Himself with the "hungry," the "thirsty," the "naked," and the "sick": "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25:40).

Of this same poverty Paul reminds the Corinthians when he speaks of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich He became poor for your sakes" (2 Cor. 8:9), and when he describes the great drama of Christ's coming in humility as the divine example to the Philippians: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man, and in habit found as man;

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He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8).

A light of heavenly consolation shines from the New Testament into the abyss of misery, poverty, and humiliation, in which innumerable victims of human society have to suffer: "I have given you an example."

B. CHRIST'S MERCY AND KINDNESS TOWARD MEN. In the midst of social misery and suffering Christ's mercy and kindness, as manifested especially in His manifold miracles of healing, are like a life-giving stream flowing through the world of human beings, offering help and solace. They are the sweetest manifestation of the divine to mankind, and are easily understood by all because there is no human heart that does not need and yearn for sympathy. We are not concerned here with the question of the possibility or historicity of miracles. It is enough for us to know that the poor needed Christ's miraculous help, that Christ had compassion on the multitude, that the writers of the "good tidings" were convinced that the Saviour demonstrated His compassion by miracles, and that the suffering was relieved.

In the mind of Christ His mercy is the characteristic mark and proof of the truth of His whole mission. There was a day in the beginning of Christ's public ministry when the disciples of John the Baptist, jealous of the deeds of Christ, came to question His right to preach to the people. The Baptist sent a delegation to the Master Himself to ask Him: "Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another?" And in proving His divine mission Christ answered thus: "Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen: The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:3-5).

The works of mercy which fill the days of the brief public ministry of Christ furnish the legal title and evidence for the arrival of the new era. "Behold two blind men, sitting

Social Message of the New Testament

The Compassion of Jesus

by the wayside, heard that Jesus passed by, and they cried out, saying: 'O Lord, Thou son of David, have mercy on us!' . . . And Jesus having compassion on them, touched their eyes. And immediately they saw, and followed Him" (Matt. 20:30-34). And again ye find "a man who had a withered hand. . . . Then He saith to the man: 'Stretch forth thy hand,' and he stretched it forth, and it was restored to health even as the other" (Matt. 12:10-13). Then again, "behold a leper came and adored Him, saying: 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.' And Jesus, stretching forth His hand, touched him, saying: 'I will: be thou made clean.' And forthwith his leprosy was cleansed" (Matt. 8:2,3; cf. Luke 17:12 sqq.). "Then was offered to Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that he spoke and saw" (Matt. 12:22; cf. 9:32 sq.). "They brought to Him many that were possessed with devils; and He cast out the spirits with His word, and all that were sick He healed" (Matt. 8:16). "When He had entered into Capharnaum, there came to Him a centurion, beseeching Him and saying: 'Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented.' . . . And Jesus said to the centurion: 'Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee.' And the servant was healed at the same hour" (Matt. 8:5-13). "And when Jesus was come in to Peter's house, and He saw his wife's mother lying, and sick of a fever. And He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose and ministered to them" (Matt. 8:14,15). "Behold a certain ruler came up, and adored Him, saying: 'Lord, my daughter is even now dead; but come, lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live.' And Jesus, rising up followed him. . . . He went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose" (Matt. 9:18-25). Lazarus had died. "And Jesus wept. . . . He cried with a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come forth.' And presently he that had been dead, came forth" (John 11:35-44). "They sent into all that country, and brought to Him all that were diseased. And they besought Him that they might touch but the hem of

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His garment. And as many as touched, were made whole" (Matt. 14:35,36; cf. 9:22). Jesus "saw a great multitude and had compassion on them and healed their sick" (Matt. 14:14). Hungry multitudes followed Him into the desert: "And when He had commanded the multitude to sit upon the grass, He took five loaves and two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat and were filled" (Matt. 14:19-20). At another time, "seeing the multitudes, He had compassion on them, because they were distressed, and lying like sheep that have no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). He came beyond the Jordan "and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there" (Matt. 19:2). "There came to Him great multitudes, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, the maimed, and many others: and they cast them down at His feet and He healed them" (Matt. 15:30). When He sent His Apostles forth to announce the "Kingdom of heaven," He bestowed His own power of mercy upon them and commanded them: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils: freely have you received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

In the eyes of Christ, however, the greatest evil in human society is not the external, material, and corporeal misery, but the internal corruption of the soul — sin. Christ's example in His attitude toward sinners is again mercy and forgiveness. To the hypocrites and Pharisees this was a scandal. They asked the disciples: "Why doth your master eat with the publicans and sinners?" In answering, Christ proclaims firmly: "Go then and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice. For I am not come to call the just, but sinners" (Matt. 9:11-13). With a heart filled with mercy He consoles the poor man sick of the palsy: "Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. . . . And the multitudes seeing it, feared and glorified God that gave such power to men" (Matt. 9:2-8). In St. John's Gospel, by means of a very beautiful picture, Christ shows how tender is His heart

**The
Tenderness
of Jesus**

Social Message of the New Testament

toward sinful humanity; "I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and flieth; and the wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep. And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling, and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me. . . . I lay down My life for My sheep" (John 10:11-15). What a consoling example! But, also, what a devastating condemnation of the "hireling" in social life!

But the most beautiful example of Christ's mercy is exhibited in that touching scene in the temple, when the scribes and Pharisees dragged the sinful woman to the feet of the Saviour: "The scribes and Pharisees bring unto Him a woman taken in adultery, and they set her in the midst, and said to Him: 'Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou?' . . . But Jesus bowing Himself down, wrote with His finger on the ground. When therefore they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself and said to them: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her!' And again stooping down, He wrote on the ground. But, they, hearing this, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest. And Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting up Himself, said to her: 'Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?' Who said: 'No man, Lord.' And Jesus said: 'Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more'" (John 8:3-11). Rightly have students of the Sacred Scriptures bestowed on this narrative the title, "gem of the Gospel." But at least for the believer in Christ and His example it must be more than a "gem" in New Testament literature. Its profound significance in practical social life must be realized. If none save those who are without sin be permitted to cast the first stone, never will

**The
Mercy
of Jesus**

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a stone be thrown. Christ and the sinner will stand alone, supreme mercy and its pitiable object.

Christ put the seal on His life's work by a final word and act of mercy when He prayed for the forgiveness of His enemies: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34), and promised to the repentant thief the paradise of heaven: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Christ's message of mercy, kindness, and forgiveness is summed up in the loving invitation which He extended to the suffering world: "Come to Me, all you that labor, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart. And you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is sweet and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30). If this message of Christ's example should actually take root in human society, the darkest clouds of sadness and bitterness would disappear.

C. CHRIST'S ZEAL FOR THE HONOR OF THE FATHER. If it is true that the final end of human society is God, the message of Christ's example directs us most surely to the Father. Christ insists that His mission on earth is the fulfilling of the will of the Father. To do the Father's will is His "food." When the disciples asked Him to eat, He answered: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work" (John 4:34). The sentiments of His parents must be subordinate to the will of the Father. When His mother asks Him sorrowfully why He remained alone in the temple of Jerusalem without His parents' knowledge, He answers: "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49.) He endures His agony in Gethsemane because of the will of the Father: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

His
Father's
Will

Social Message of the New Testament

His
Father's
Honor

Kind and merciful as the Saviour was toward suffering humanity, yet when He was confronted by those who offended the honor of God and those who commercialized the sacred values of religion, He became stern and bitter. The Gospel has preserved a vivid and realistic picture: "The pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when He made as it were a scourge of little cords, He drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changers He poured out, and the tables He overthrew. And to them that sold doves He said: 'Take these things hence, and make not the house of My Father a house of traffic'" (John 2:13-16). According to Matthew, Jesus addressed the offenders with the words of the prophets Isaias and Jeremias: "My house shall be called the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves" (Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11). These words are not the manifestation of the disturbed temper of an angry Christ, as some liberals maintain, but the expression of His sovereign regard for the supreme sanctity of the will of the Father and for the sacredness of religious values—an example which implies a command to His followers.

D. THE HUMAN TOUCH IN CHRIST'S LIFE. From a natural standpoint, nothing brings Jesus closer to the individual members of human society, which He came to renew, than the little and seemingly insignificant incidents of His life. They are, after all, a sanctioning of the normal human life, which protects the Christian against exaggerated demands of hypocrites. This "humanity" in the Divine Saviour made a deep impression upon St. Paul, which he records in the striking words: He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, *and in habit found as man*" (Phil. 2:7). And Christ was "in habit found as man," as He Himself points out emphatically even to the "multitude": "John came neither eating nor drinking, and

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they say: 'He has a devil.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say: 'Behold a man that is a glutton and a wine-drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners' " (Matt. 11:18,19).

As found in the English, the words added by Matthew, "Wisdom is justified by her children," do not connote the almost ironical idea of superiority and self-defense which the original text suggests. It implies: "The truth is vindicated even by their works" (i.e., the works of John and Jesus). It has been rightly remarked by Catholic exegesis: "The very choice of simile indicates a superior humor of Jesus: He is not angry, He does not threaten, but He deems it beneath His dignity to defend His and the Baptist's way of life."¹⁴

He does not hesitate to be present with His mother and disciples at the wedding feast of Cana and to contribute by a miracle to the joy of the feast: "There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage." And "the wine failing," He changed the six pots of water into wine. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him" (John 2:1-11). There is another example: "There was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans and he was rich." Being small of stature he climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus passing by. And Jesus said to him: "Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house." Swiftly he descended and received Jesus with joy. "And when all saw it, they murmured, saying that He was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner" (Luke 19:2-7). But this was no concern to Jesus. On a further occasion at Bethania, ignoring the hypocritical objection of Judas Iscariot, He did not demur at the expensive ceremony of the anointing of His feet with rich ointment: "Mary took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the

Gently
Human

Social Message of the New Testament

ointment" (John 12:1-3). He even accepted invitations to dinner from Pharisees: "One of the Pharisees desired Him to eat with him. And He went into the house of the Pharisee and sat down to meat." And there He accepted the anointing even of a sinful woman, so that the Pharisee was shocked: "This man, if He were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that touches Him, that she is a sinner." But Jesus said to him: "I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with tears has washed My feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she with ointment hath anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to thee: many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much" (Luke 7:36-47).

Jesus has an understanding for the social ceremonies of His time. He is "in habit found as a man." "In fact much of His teaching was connected with dining, the social meal giving either the occasion or the analogy of His thought."¹⁵

Though it seem trifling, another point should not be overlooked. Christ loved nature. His fondness for natural beauty reveals a fascinating "human touch": "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? . . . Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these" (Matt. 6:26-29). Thus, in His ordinary daily conduct Jesus presents the example of a normal human life with all its decent enjoyments. It is by no means irreverent to refer also to this phase of Christ's example, since real Christians, as well as would-be Christians, oftentimes cannot understand how Christ may be imitated in the honest pleasures of ordinary social life. Christian sanctity and sanctimoniousness are quite different things.

E. CHRIST'S SELF-SACRIFICE. The supreme social message

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in Christ's example is contained in His self-sacrifice, which accomplished the salvation of mankind and the renewal of human society. The sacrifice of Calvary is the completion of the work of Salvation which began in Bethlehem. If we speak of a "new life" in a new society, founded by Christ's Incarnation, we here mean "Incarnation" to be understood in the broad sense of divine Salvation, which began with the Birth of Christ and was terminated and sealed by His Death and Resurrection. The whole life of Christ is indeed a continuous manifestation of His self-sacrificing spirit and purpose: such was His birth, His obedience at Nazareth, His humble work as a carpenter, His life of poverty, when He had "not where to lay His head." The climax of it all was Calvary. "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). This idea of sacrificing Himself for many accompanied Him from the manger to the cross. "I am the good shepherd," He exclaimed. "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. . . . I lay down My life for My sheep" (John 10:11-15). Therefore, "Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the ancients and scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and the third day rise again" (Matt. 16:21).

Sacrifice
of Self

If Christian social life means a continuation of the Salvation brought about by Christ's self-sacrifice, then it means also our own self-sacrifice, in imitation of His, for the Salvation of mankind. It means also our own supreme and self-sacrificing effort for the welfare of human society. Unfortunately, this pre-eminent Christian ideal seems very much lost sight of in our modern social life. Our so-called "charities" are often vastly different from the charity which is accompanied by Christian self-sacrifice.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL MESSAGE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING IN GENERAL

If Christ never had opened His lips to speak to humanity, His example in poverty, mercy, kindness, forgiveness, and all His dealings with His fellows together with His supreme sacrifice would of themselves be a most eloquent message to His new society. But He opened His lips and spoke words of lasting value, divine words of guidance and direction in the complicated problems of life. And it is of the utmost importance that we permit the words of Christ, which seem to be forgotten even by many "Christians," to speak to us with their own original power and directness. Most of them are easily understood as to their fundamental meaning and do not require a lengthy commentary.

1. THE KINGDOM OF GOD: ITS NATURE AND CHARACTER

The sum total of blessing by which Jesus intended to regenerate human society is contained in His proclamation of the "Kingdom of God," or "Kingdom of Heaven." This term denotes not only preaching, but the summary of salvation. With the announcement of the "Kingdom of God" He opened His public ministry: "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God" (Mark 1:4). With the same announcement He closed His earthly career: "He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the Kingdom of God" (Acts 1:8). This was "the consuming passion of His heart."¹ Nearly all modern writers on the social question are convinced of the importance of this phrase and of its correct understanding. And nearly all admit that it indicates the social character

"The
Kingdom
of God"

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of Christ's new foundation, for the term itself denotes a congregation of many citizens under the supreme rule of God's kingship.² Since it comprises the main object of the mission of Christ, misinterpretation of it must necessarily lead to serious misunderstanding of His social doctrine. The expression, "Kingdom of God," is well known to every Christian and generally conveys a notion of happiness even to those who know little about its meaning.

What meaning did it have in the mind of Jesus? The Master never gave an exact definition of it, and started preaching about it without any explanation. There is nothing surprising in this, because for the Jews it was the well-known term for their Messianic hope, the fulfillment of their supreme desire and aspiration. It must have struck them with the force of lightning when they suddenly heard the long-desired, yet incredible proclamation: "The Kingdom of God is at hand." The important twofold question arises: How did the Jews understand the term? And did Jesus agree with their interpretation? Unfortunately, New Testament interpreters are not in agreement on these points. Nor is it in harmony with our purpose to give a complete account of the controversy. However, before we proceed, we must come to a clear understanding of what is essential in the phrase. This understanding is necessary before we can draw any conclusions. Let us then glance first at a few non-Catholic explanations.

According to Professor Mathews, the Jews "expected that God would empower a man by His resident spirit to become the savior of His people and the founder of His kingdom. They believed also that this national salvation was to be accompanied by the defeat of Satan, to whom their sufferings were ultimately due. As this Empowered One, Jesus had to determine His role, if He were to be more than magician or *mahdi* or fanatic, there was to be laid upon Him the obligation to disclose to His followers just what sort of kingdom of God they were to expect. He shared in and started with their expectation of the great transformation. He endeavored to set

**Non-Catholic
Explanations**

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forth the true nature of the divine interposition in history. The perception of this task explains why during the first half of His brief public ministry He spoke so frequently about the Kingdom of God and the defeat of Satan. He was not introducing a new conception; He was giving new content to revolutionary psychology. To this end He spoke in parables, endeavoring to show the true nature of the Kingdom of God which both He and His hearers expected. And this He made pellucidly clear by His central analogy: God was not an emperor but a father; the reign of God was not so much a kingdom as a triumph of the goodwill of God in human affairs."³ "Jesus transformed the revolutionary hope into a sacrificial social-mindedness. Like His contemporaries, Jesus believed that the establishment of the kingdom of God as a gift from God would occur before the generation to which He spoke should have passed away. His immediate followers never doubted this. They were sure that they lived at the end of an historical epoch. . . . His teaching was directed to those who thought that the kingdom of God, with its catastrophes and triumphs, was close at hand."⁴ "We may, perhaps, find in his teachings interim *mores* but not an interim ideal. That ideal was unaffected and uncaused by his belief in the immediacy of the kingdom."⁵

Rauschenbusch declares that the hope of the Kingdom was "still a national and collective idea. It involved the restoration of Israel as a nation to outward independence, security and power, such as it had under the Davidic Kings. It involved that social justice, prosperity, and happiness for which the law and the prophets called, and for which the common people always long. It involved that religious purity and holiness of which the nation had always fallen short. And all this was to come in an ideal degree, such as God alone by direct intervention could bestow."⁶ Christ, he holds, shared "the substance" of the contemporary Messianic hope, but in His teaching "we find He consciously opposed some features of the popular hope and thought to make it truer."⁷ In a later book

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this writer is more outspoken: "The Kingdom of God is the first and most essential dogma of the Christian faith. It is also the lost social ideal of Christendom."⁸ "The Christian religion," Rauschenbusch continues, "first of all . . . is a religion for this earth and for the present life. The old religious aims over-emphasized the other world and undervalued the present world. They taught man to regard the earth as a vale of tears, a place of pilgrimage through which we must hasten, a vestibule of heaven or hell. The body with its instincts was an enemy of the soul. . . . The eye of faith was turned upward and saw all its visions beyond the stars."⁹ It is plain what sort of "Kingdom" this materially and socialistically minded writer has discovered in Christ's teaching.

According to the sources available, the "Kingdom of God" must have been to the audience of Jesus a complex of various ideas, in the main of national, Jewish, and materialistic character. It was certainly not understood as a "kingdom *in heaven*," in another world, but as a kingdom *on earth* where God from heaven was ruler. It was to them, says Leopold Fonck, S.J., "a concrete kingdom, a community, whose head was Almighty God and which was governed by Jehovah Himself through His earthly representative, who was invested with the divine authority, and in accordance with His Laws and constitution. The Jews . . . looked forward to the coming . . . of the kingdom of God as the realization of all their national, earthly dreams."¹⁰ But this rule of God included also forgiveness of sins and joyful harmony with God.¹¹

As the Jews
Saw It

The New Testament testimonies reveal fairly well how deeply the expectation of the "Kingdom" was rooted in national hopes and aspirations. Zachary, the father of the Baptist, who felt in his heart the coming of the Kingdom, exclaims: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because He has visited and wrought the redemption of His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation to us, in the house of David His servant. . . . Salvation from our *enemies*, and from the hand of all that *hate us*, to perform mercy to our fathers, and to remem-

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ber His holy testament . . . that being delivered from the hand of our *enemies*, we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him, all our days" (Luke 1:68-75). In the mind of Christ's contemporaries, the head of the new movement could not be anything less than "King": "There came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying: 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews?'" (Matt. 2:1,2.) Thus we see that even the Far East had heard of the new "King" of the new era! When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people greeted Him as "King": "Blessed be the King who cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory on high" (Luke 19:38). Even the mother of the two Apostles, James and John, thought only of earthly splendor when she asked Jesus: "Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on the right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom" (Matt. 20:21). And the inscription on the cross, although in mockery, called Him a "King": "The Inscription of His cause was written over: The King of the Jews" (Mark 15:26).

Christ's Interpreta- tion

But all this was contrary to the idea of Christ Himself. True, He claimed Kingship, even before Pilate, but in solemn protest to the ordinary meaning of the word: "My kingdom is not of this world. If My Kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not from hence" (John 18:36). Once when the enthusiastic multitude wanted to make Him King, He fled: "Jesus therefore, when He knew that they would come to take Him by force and make Him king, fled . . . into the mountain Himself alone" (John 6:15). From all this we can see that Jesus accepted the well-known external form of the Jewish hope expressed by the phrase, "Kingdom of God," and filled it with an entirely new and unexpected content.

The first and most vital mark of His Kingdom is that it is not "of this world." In this point Christ stood in as decided an opposition to the Jewish expectation as to the declarations of modern false prophets of human society. The kingdom He

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intended to bring to humanity was first of all *spiritual*: "For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.) The motto of the new Kingdom of human society is the fulfillment of the will of the Father: "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom, but he that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21). The spirituality of the new Kingdom is beautifully illustrated by the narration of the Temptation of Christ. The merely materialistic view of the new society is Satanic. The devil tempts Him with the proposition of material welfare: "Command that these stones be made bread." Christ answers with a word that is still the true norm for Christians: "Not in bread alone doth man live." Satan tempts Him with the proposition of pride and a miraculous display of power. Christ answers: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan tempts Him with the glory of worldly authority: he "showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." Christ answers: "Begone, Satan, for it is written: The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:7-10). The marks of the Kingdom of Christ or the new human society are neither material happiness, nor pride, nor power, nor force. The chief mark is the service of God to which every human being is bound. Christ's Kingdom is, therefore, above all ethical and religious.

For this reason it is the treasure most to be valued and sought after by men: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you" (John 6:26). However, seeking the Kingdom of God, which is superior to all earthly goods, does not mean condemnation or even exclusion of earthly welfare. The latter is rather guaranteed to the faithful servant of the Heavenly Kingdom, as Christ assures us: "Seek not what you shall eat or what you shall drink, and be not lifted up on high. For all these things do the nations of the

God's
Kingdom
a "Treasure"

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world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12:29-31). "In these words," Simon Weber states, "there is established, as a quality of the kingdom of God and its laws, that it communicates to its obedient citizens the necessary means of earthly life. Therefore, apologetes rightly see an argument for the divine character of the revelation in the excellency of its doctrines for economic welfare."¹² Christ Himself compares His Kingdom to a "treasure" and a "pearl" for which men should be ready to make any sacrifice: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matt. 13:44-46).

**"A Grain
of Mustard
Seed"**

In contrast to the hope of the Jews who anticipated a catastrophic advent of the Kingdom by which God would set up His blissful reign on earth, Jesus proclaims: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which is the least indeed of all seeds, but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof." And again: "The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened" (Matt. 13:31-33). Christ's Kingdom is to develop slowly and gradually as a regenerating force in the midst of men.

**God's
Kingdom
Universal**

The universality of Christ's Kingdom marks another contrast to Jewish expectations. Jesus broke down the barriers which excluded all save the sons of Israel from the blessings of the Kingdom, and opened the boundaries of His realm to all men: "Come to Me, all you that labor . . . and I will refresh you" (Matt. 11:28). He heals the servant of the pagan centurion and remarks significantly: "Amen, I say to you, I

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have not found so great faith in Israel" (Matt. 8:10). He cured the daughter of the Canaanite woman, and bestowed on her similar praise for her faith. "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt" (Matt. 15:28). It is not a Jew, but a foreigner, a Samaritan, whom Christ chooses as an example of the merciful love which His Kingdom demands (Luke 10:25-37). Of the ten lepers Jesus had cured, only the Samaritan showed gratitude: "There is no one found to return and give glory to God, but this stranger" (Luke 17:18). In the parable of the wicked husbandmen who killed the son of their lord, Christ even announced the exclusion of the Jews: "What will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others" (Luke 20:15,16).

The most important feature of Christ's Kingdom is that it embraces time and eternity. It is already present at Christ's time: "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). Many parables of Jesus describe its growth and development on earth. It embraces good and bad and is, therefore, in this world, and is not a state of perfection, as the Jews imagined: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes. Which when it was filled, they drew it out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world. The Angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:47-50). The same truth is illustrated by the parable of the "cockle" among the "good seed": "As the cockle therefore is gathered up, and burnt with fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send His Angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:40-42). And after this day of reckoning the Kingdom of perfection continues in the future world: "Then shall the just shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43). St.

**For Time
and Eternity**

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John designates the state of happiness for the just in the future world by the term of life: "God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John 3:16).

Thus, despite the views of Rauschenbusch, the "Kingdom of God" on earth really is a "vestibule of heaven or hell," according to the authority of Christ Himself, and ill is the service to society which withholds the truth from it. And the most vital truth human society has to learn is that this earthly life, no matter how highly it may be valued in itself, is ultimately a preparation for the eternal life. In order to evaluate earthly goods correctly, human society must be considered in the light of the final purpose of God in regard to mankind. The Kingdom of God on earth is "the organization of human society in obedience to the will of God and the fulfillment of His purpose."¹³

"The primitive Christian idea of the Kingdom of God," says Christopher Dawson, "was essentially twofold. On the one hand, there is the period of hidden life and growth, the kingdom in seed; on the other, the state of perfection and glory, the kingdom of fruit."¹⁴ According to this same writer the "Kingdom of God" is another term for "Salvation," as when he says: "The Kingdom of God is shown to be nothing less than the restoration of the whole creation in and through Christ."¹⁵ But then, whatever Christ claims for Himself He must claim for His Kingdom. And in the former regard His assertions are most categorical: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; . . . and he that taketh not up his cross and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for Me, shall find it" (Matt. 10:37-39).

If our society seeks to be saved in Christ, it must grow accustomed again to forgotten "hard" sayings and the principles of the Redeemer who knows no compromise.

Man as an individual and society as a whole have, as we

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saw, a twofold destiny, duties for this world as well as for the world to come. In the immediately preceding chapter we stressed the future life. But the social message of the Kingdom furnishes us direction and guidance also for this world in which we have to fulfill our earthly duties.

2. THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

It is self-evident and therefore superfluous to dwell at length on the fact that Christ teaches the absolute dependence of man on God his Creator. God is the "Lord of heaven and earth" (Matt. 11:25). Man cannot serve God and the world: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). God is the supreme authority and source of all earthly authority, as Jesus declares before Pilate: "Thou shouldst not have any power against Me, unless it were given thee from above" (John 19:11). Much more important is the vigorous insistence of Jesus on the fact that God is not only Creator and Lord, but the loving Father of men. Nearly always when He speaks of God He speaks of Him as the "Heavenly Father."

The supreme message of Christ is indeed the Fatherhood of God. Once Philip asked the Lord: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us" (John 14:8). "The cry of Philip . . . was the outburst of humanity's heart, and the answer it drew forth has satisfied generations."¹⁶ And the answer was this: "Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also" (John 14:9). The Fatherhood of God was also known in the Old Testament times, but Christ, by His Incarnation, revealed this Fatherhood in a much higher sense. He brought us so close to God that we are, in the words of St. Peter, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). St. Paul is most eloquent on this subject: "You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba — Father" (Rom. 8:15).¹⁷ To lead humanity to the Heavenly Father was the purpose of Christ's mission. Therefore, He taught men the new prayer: "Thus, therefore, shall you pray: Our Father who

**Our
Father**

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art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy Kingdom come" (Matt. 6:9,10). He it is who reveals the Father: "No one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither doth anyone know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27). In words which shine like stars, Christ praises the mercy and kindness of the Heavenly Father: "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? . . . If the grass of the field, which is today and tomorrow, is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe, how much more you, O ye of little faith" (Matt. 6:26-30). "If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him!" (Matt. 7:11.) The Heavenly Father cares especially for the lost sinner. "What think you? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray; doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the mountains, and go to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it, amen I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that than for the ninety-nine that went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father, who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:12-14). The most touching picture of the mercy of the Heavenly Father is given in the parable of the prodigal son, who "wasted his substance living riotously" but returned in penance: "And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him, fell upon his neck and kissed him. . . . And the father said to his servants: 'Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry. Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again; was lost and is found'" (Luke 15:11-32).

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAN'S DUTY TOWARD GOD
True, the Old Testament writings speak also of God as the

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"Father" of mankind. But Christ's Incarnation imparted to this title a new meaning, surpassing the merely moral relation to God in former times and declaring man a participant in the nature of God through the Redemption of Christ. At any rate, the social value of the truth of God's Fatherhood (although by non-Catholics it is not understood in its full sense) has been readily admitted by non-Catholics as well as Catholics. It is an inestimable consolation for men to know that they all belong to a great family of which the loving and merciful God is the head.

This merciful love of the Heavenly Father demands a corresponding attitude and behavior on the part of man as a child of God. The greatest commandment imposed upon him is the *love of God*. Very impressively does the Gospel teach this commandment. A "doctor of the Law" asked Jesus: "Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus said to him: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment" (Matt. 22:36,37). Obviously this love for God who is the Supreme Ruler, implies *harmony* with the will of God and obedience to His commandments. The daily prayer of His new society is to be: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Therefore Christ declares emphatically the *validity of the Law of Mount Sinai* for the new society. "If thou wilt enter into life," He says to the young man who asked Him about life, "keep the commandments. . . . Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and thy mother" (Matt. 19:17-19).

Love
of God

But new — and beyond the commandments — is the counsel of the new era: "If thou wilt be *perfect*, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me" (Matt. 19:21). In accordance, therefore, with His own example of *self-sacrifice*, He requires a spirit of sacrifice also from His followers. Indeed, if any-

Self-
Sacrifice

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thing stands between the Kingdom and man, though it be man's most precious possession, it has to be removed. With an unwonted sharpness Christ demands: "If thy hand, or thy foot, scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to go into life, maimed or lame, than having two hands and two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee having one eye to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Matt. 18:8,9).

**"As Little
Children"**

As He "humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:8), so He demands *humility* as the characteristic mark of the members of His new society. Humility indicates greatness in His Kingdom: "At that hour the disciples came to Jesus, saying: 'Who, thinkest Thou, is the greater in the Kingdom of heaven?' And Jesus calling unto Him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said: 'Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdom of heaven'" (Matt. 18:1-4). To those of a childlike humility and simplicity the mysteries of His Kingdom shall be revealed: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth . . . Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones" (Matt. 11:25). According to Mark, the Apostles disputed on the way to Capernaum, "which of them should be the greatest." And Jesus said to them: "If any man desire to be first, he shall be the last of all, and the minister of all" (Mark 9:33,34). Luke preserves a similar word of Christ: "He that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at the table or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at the table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:26,27). *Humble service* is the manifestation of greatness in the Kingdom: "He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever shall exalt himself,

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shall be humbled; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:11,12). The same programmatic statement closes the narrative of the Pharisee and the publican in which Jesus graphically contrasts hypocritical pride and true humility, concluding with the words: "I say to you, this man [the humble publican] went down into his house justified rather than the other" (Luke 18:14). Paradoxically in the new society, "many that are first, shall be last, and the last shall be first" (Matt. 19:30). No religious thinker can fail to realize that in the mind of Christ humility belongs to the fundamentals of the new society.

The language of the humble heart that recognizes its dependence on God is *prayer*. As Jesus Himself prayed to the Father and gave the most humble example to mankind when "He fell upon His face praying" in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39), so He admonishes us "that we ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). But in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican He demands a humble prayer and condemns the proud prayer of the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14). He despises the prayer of mere display: "When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to the Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee. And when you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens. For they think that in their much speaking they may be heard. Be not therefore you like them, for your Father knoweth what is needful for you, before you ask Him" (Matt. 6:5-8).

Here Christ condemns meaningless, mechanical prayers, not the long prayer of endurance and perseverance, as He so beautifully shows in the narrative of the persistent friend who knocks at the door of his neighbor at midnight, asking for loaves of bread: "If he shall continue knocking, I say to you, although he will not rise and give him because he is

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Language
of Prayer**

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his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say to you: ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Luke 11:8-10).

Confidence
and Care-
freeness

The power of Christian prayer consists in absolute *confidence* in God: "Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not . . . if you shall say to this mountain: 'Take up and cast thyself into the sea,' it shall be done. And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing you shall receive" (Matt. 21:21,22). And on another occasion the Saviour uses similar words: "Amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain: 'Remove from hence hither,' and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you" (Matt. 17:19).

Confidence in God, however, is not possible without simple sincerity. How great the insistence of Jesus is on this point is evident from His counsel on the use of an oath. The Jews had the custom of confirming a statement by all manner of swearing. With this custom in mind, Jesus says: "I say to you not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be: yea, yea; no, no. And that which is over and above these is of evil" (Matt. 5:34-37). The Christian's word of truth needs no further assurance.

To the simple and sincere children of God the Gospel offers a freedom from temporal care and burden — a freedom incomprehensible to a generation harassed with the world's frets and worries. In words of burnished gold Christ gives us the Gospel of holy *carefreeness and confidence in God's providence*: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the

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very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; better are you than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:29-31). In the Sermon on the Mount the Saviour inserted the compendium of His heavenly message of trust in God: "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe, how much more you, O ye of little faith! Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: 'What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?' For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:26-32). This is not a philosophy of carelessness but of sacred carefreeness and confidence in God, or of Christian "optimism," as modern authors call it.¹⁸ This "optimism" of Jesus may sound too fantastic to modern ears. "But modern men precisely," to quote the words of Dausch, "who in the struggle for their existence no longer can understand this joyful attitude of Jesus toward life, should gather new strength from this joyful attitude of Jesus toward life, should gather new strength from his heart-moving confidence in the fatherly love of God, recommended by Jesus."¹⁹

To prayer and absolute confidence in God the Christian must, however, add his *own work*. "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). "A sentence, fraught with contents!" exclaims Petrus Dausch. "The last and highest aim of the new Ethics of Jesus are, therefore, good works for the glorification of God our Father in heaven and for the salvation of mankind."²⁰

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4. THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Brotherly Love

After Jesus had shown to the "doctor of the Law" what "the greatest and first commandment" is (i.e., the commandment of the love of God), He added: "The second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:39,40). The Gospel of St. John preserves the beautiful words of Jesus which make brotherly love the distinctive mark of the new era: "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another" (John 13:34, 35). The "Fatherhood of God" and "brotherhood" of men should, according to the preaching of Jesus, be the two poles around which human society in the new era revolves. Present-day realities prove that society, even though it bears the Christian name, is far from the Christian ideal.

"Brotherhood," indeed, is a word that has been caught up as a slogan of the time by atheistic Communists as well as by the true disciples of Christ. Humanity seems to realize that the master key for the solution of the social question in daily practical life is the brotherhood of men. "The fundamental virtue in the ethics of Jesus was love, because love is the society-making quality," says Walter Rauschenbusch. "It is love that holds together the basal human organization, the family. The physical expression of all love and friendship is the desire to get together and be together. Love creates fellowship. In the measure in which love increases in any social organism, it will hold together without coercion."²¹ And again, "The law of love transcends all other laws. It does not stop where they stop."²² Shailer Mathews writes: "The way to do God's will is to love others and to do to them as you would like to have them do to you."²³ "If love is not in the nature of things, it is weakness; but if it is what Jesus taught, it is the ultimate dynamic." It is "an urge to social co-opera-

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tion in which social co-operating parties treat each other as persons.”²⁴ So much for our modern authors! — and yet seldom in the annals of the world's history do we find less brotherhood and more hatred. Humanity, “Christians” included, needs a fundamental re-orientation and reformation according to the law of Christ: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Let us investigate, then, what are the demands of this brotherly love?

A. JUSTICE AND TRUTH. Christ was not the first to lay down the principle that men must live according to justice and truth. All pagan religions, even in their most corrupt state, retained as a formal principle of society the law of justice, which is universally recognized as the foundation of social order. Hence, Christ did not establish a new principle when He laid down the law of justice. But He incorporated it in the Christian code of ethics as the first principle of brotherly love.

Therefore, in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI insists continually on this basic principle of all human dealings, and modern writers on the social question, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, realize the importance of the message of the Supreme Shepherd of Christianity.²⁵ “If redress is denied us, we feel the foundation of the moral universe totter.”²⁶

Christ Himself was confronted with a generation guilty of injustice, especially on the part of those who by their rank in life were supposed to be the official protectors of justice, the scribes and Pharisees. Hence it was that the kind-hearted Saviour, who from the cross itself spoke words of forgiveness for those who condemned Him to death, was yet most merciless in His condemnation of these perpetrators of injustice:

**The Law
of Justice**

“The scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not. For they say and do not. For they bind heavy and insuperable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders; but with a finger

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of their own they will not move them. . . . Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment. . . . Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because you tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law, judgment and mercy and faith. These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. . . . Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because you are like to whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly indeed appear to men just, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . . Behold I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them you will put to death and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city" (Matt. 23:2-34).

Therefore, He declares in the Sermon on the Mount: "I tell you, that unless your justice abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

The central law of social justice is laid down in the "*golden rule*": "All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them" (Matt. 7:12). It is irreconcilable with this law to see the faults of one's neighbor but not one's own: "How sayest thou to thy brother: 'Let me cast the mote out of thy eye,' and behold a beam is in thy own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:4,5).

It is also foreign to the spirit of Christ to pass rash judgment on your neighbor; "Judge not, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. 7:1,2). Similar in content are the words of the Lord as preserved by St. John: "Judge not ac-

**Rash
Judgment**

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according to the appearance, but judge just judgment" (John 7:24). Never was rash judgment and self-justified behavior so effectively put to silence as in the narrative of the sinful woman, when Christ, reading the heart of the accusers, wrote on the ground. "But they hearing this went out one by one, beginning at the eldest. And Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst" (John 8:8,9). Jesus Himself, who went willingly to His death on the cross and bore the hardships of life, resented injustice. While He defended Himself before the high priest with all the candor of truth: "one of the servants standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying: 'Answerest Thou the high priest so?' Jesus answered him: If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil, but if well, why strikest thou Me?" (John 18:22,23.)

St. John records a retort of Nicodemus, the friend of Jesus, directed to the Pharisees when they unjustly intended to "apprehend" Christ: "Doth our law judge any man, unless it first hear him, and know what he doth?" (John 8:51.)

Therefore, justice occupies a special place in the solemn Beatitudes. On the one hand, Christ pronounces special blessing for the lovers of justice: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill." On the other hand, He pronounces benediction on those who suffer injustice: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for My sake; be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven" (Matt. 5:6-12). Justice as the principle *par excellence* of the Kingdom of God ranks above all earthly goods and desires. Hence the unqualified demand of Christ: "Seek ye . . . first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). If mankind is to survive in the flood of injustice that covers the world, it must seek shelter in the ark of God's justice.

Sister to justice and almost equally necessary for the nor-

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A Life of Truth

mal life of human society is the virtue of truth. This is brought out forcibly in the discourses of Christ in the Gospel of St. John. Jesus, the founder of the new society, is the Eternal Truth and demands from His followers a life of truth: "He that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God" (John 3:21). "God is a spirit, and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Christ came, to bring the truth, and promised His disciples: "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The Paraclete whom Christ promised to send after His Ascension is "the Spirit of truth" (John 15:26): "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth" (John 16:13). Christ speaks in these passages primarily of the supernatural truth of Salvation. But the supernatural truth demands of Christian society also a manifestation of natural truthfulness of men in order to save human society from fraud and deception. Justice and truth go hand in hand. They are the pillars of human society. If they collapse society falls with them.

B. EQUALITY. In our age of "democracy" equality is a much-abused term. The Gospel of Christ preaches the only true equality of the members of human society. It has been said: "Probably the strongest objection to the recognition in actual life of this ideal of Jesus is the ineradicable conviction that social equality is impracticable. Men have dreamed of it and have died, leaving their dreams to the laughter of their times and the libraries of their descendants. . . . Men are not equal, and fraternity is a word for orators and French public buildings. So men say, or think, or they keep silent." And the answer given to the objection is part of the truth: "Jesus does not claim that men in the world today are physiologically equal. There are the lame and the halt. Nor are they mentally on an equality. There are men to whom one talent could be entrusted, and those to whom five and ten. Nor does Jesus so fall into the class of nature-philosophers as to teach because men are to be brothers they therefore are to be twins."²⁷

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But there is another sublime solution of the problem. The great fundamental basis for Christian equality is the fact, mysterious yet true, that all members of Christian society belong to one body, the "mystical body of Christ," as was pointed out from the beginning. In the clear perception of this truth lies the right understanding of Christian equality, which in spite of fundamental similarity admits a difference. As all members of a body partake in the same life current pervading the body, and as all members of a body have equal rights to their own existence and equal duties toward preservation of the existence of the whole body, though in different form and manner and function, so it is with the body of Christian society. All members share in the same life current, which is the Spirit of Christ; all have the same principle and right to existence here and hereafter, all the same destiny, all the same fundamental obligation to keep up the body of Christ in health and strength, yet there is no identity of members and no identity of function in the individual members. In spite of all equality there remains a difference: the hand should not desire to take up the function of the eye. And yet this difference does not mar the most noble equality between the members of society which according to Christ's teaching is a sacred democracy. Not in the sense which "regards democracy as a crude destructive force that cares nothing for the finer values of civilized life, that is indifferent to culture and scientific knowledge and seeks only to satisfy the vanity and greed of the masses,"²⁸ nor in the sense of the opposite extreme which "regards all evils of society as due to the misdeeds of kings and governments and believes that, if once the power is put into the hands of the common people, everything will go well, everyone will be happy, and the world will be transformed into a Utopia,"²⁹ but in the sense which understands democracy as "*essentially aristocracy for all*,"³⁰ that is, offering "the best" to all and demanding "the best" from all.

Christian
Equality

The best Christ could offer in the name of the Father was

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the love of the Father. He announced to all without exception that God is the Father when He taught them to pray: "Our Father." No one is excluded from the blessings of God's Fatherhood. If He takes care of the birds, and the lilies, and the grass of the field, so much more will He take care of His own children. He "makes the sun rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). Christ Himself offered His best to society when He declared Himself the "good shepherd" who "giveth his life for his sheep" (John 10:11), a truth which He illustrated repeatedly in His discourses and His parables and finally by His death on the cross.

**All Children
of God**

But He also demands the best from every human being: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39), because all human beings, poor or rich, crippled or healthy, white or colored, sinner or just, are children of the same Father in heaven and brothers of Christ, and therefore all are equally bound by the same law of love. No man on earth can dispense himself from this universal obligation, which is the *magna charta* of the new society. In the face of this new law all distinctions and relations, even blood relations, disappear. Jesus made this clear in a dramatic moment when He was speaking to the "multitudes": "And one said unto Him: 'Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, seeking Thee.' But He answering him that told Him, said: 'Who is My mother, and who are My brethren?' And stretching forth His hand toward His disciples, He said: 'Behold My mother and My brethren.' For whosoever shall do the will of My Father that is in heaven, he is My brother, and sister and mother" (Matt. 12:47-50). All merely human perspectives vanish. The class distinction of our economic society has no place in Christ's Kingdom: "Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first" (Matt. 19:30). Even the sinners seem not unworthy of God's company. He selects His Apostle Matthew from the despised class of the publicans. He heals the sinners and dines with them. He consoles the sinful

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woman: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much" (Luke 7:47). In Christ's eyes all are equally precious.

The pagan world treated women, children, and slaves with more or less contempt. "The Founder of Christianity had different ideas," Alphonse Lugan observes, "He rescued the woman from the scorn of man by that amazing defense of the adulteress, by making her man's equal before God's justice, which she can appease by loving repentance as well as he. He defended children by condemning as a murderer the man who should put a stumbling-block in their path. He raised the slave by teaching that human worth does not consist in possessions and by attacking those supermen of the period, the Pharisees."³¹ "By aiming straight at the individual's inner worth, regardless of appearances, it [the Gospel] arrives at a new appreciation of values."³²

Yet, Christ recognized one special distinction. The greatest in human society is he who renders the greatest *service*: "He that will be first among you, shall be your servant; even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a redemption for many" (Matt. 20:27,28). A spirit of self-sacrifice in the service of humanity conformable to the example of Christ, is the outstanding social virtue demanded by Christ. If there be any inequality among men in natural gifts or external conditions, it is met by the word of Christ: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required: and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more" (Luke 12:48).

**The
Distinction
of Service**

The question may be raised how Christ's Gospel of equality of men can be reconciled with His recognition of the institutions of servitude and slavery existing in His time. Did not Christ Himself consider it unfeasible to treat a servant like a lord, when He asked: "Which of you having a servant plowing or feeding cattle will say to him when he is come from the field: 'Immediately go, sit down to meat'; and will not rather say: 'Make ready my supper, and gird thyself and serve me whilst I eat and drink, and afterwards thou shalt

**Equal
Soul-Value**

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eat and drink'?" (Luke 17:7-9.) To this Shailer Mathews rightly replies: "Jesus was never so crude a thinker as to imagine that because a man loves humanity he must disintegrate society as a step towards a happier recombination. And therefore he did not destroy all social conventionalities or a traditional division of labor."³³ It may be added that slavery among the Jews, with whom Jesus lived, was, because of their higher religious standards, not nearly so humiliating and debasing as in the pagan Greco-Roman world, and, therefore, did not constitute so grave a social evil. If Christ tolerated slavery and the existing institution of servants, He did not violate His principle of equality of men, for the equality preached by Him refers above all to the intrinsic worth of man, not to his external state. As in the human body not all members have the same form, so in the "mystical body" not all members have the same state and vocation. But by the declaration of the brotherhood of men the equal soul-value of all is established, and hereby the essential, degrading element of slavery is abolished. Christ identifies Himself with the "hungry" and the "thirsty," the "stranger" and the "naked," even with the prisoner (Matt. 25:42,43); He certainly includes the slave also as His own likeness. When all has been said, it was the teaching of Christ which led to the manumission of slaves and logically moved to the destruction of slavery itself.

Law of Solidarity

C. **SOLIDARITY.** Christ wanted human society to be a vast indissoluble unit, governed by a law of solidarity binding all men under all circumstances. Simon Weber, in his work dealing with the Gospel and Labor, declares: "The Supreme will has established an inviolable solidarity. Whoever steps out of it, breaks up the most sacred life-relations with the Highest."³⁴ Christ illustrated the absolute necessity of unity for human society most strikingly: "Every Kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Matt. 12:25,26). When He, therefore, united human society by the bond of brotherly

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love, He did not give a counsel which may be accepted or refused, but a sacred command: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." No man can shake off this obligation and still be a Christian. It suffers no exception. The Christian law of solidarity postulates a number of attitudes in social life which, for the greatest part, transcend every experience in religious history. It may be said without exaggeration that it frequently demands genuine heroism from the Christian member of society. And this fact explains the failure of our modern, pampered world to come near to a realization of the ideal.

The following are the obligations of Christian Solidarity:

a) The hardest and most difficult demand of Christ is the command to *love our enemies*. Yet, knowing that the solidarity of human society necessarily would break down without the observance of this law, He makes it the cornerstone of brotherly love. It was a turning point in the religious ethics of the world when Jesus proclaimed what might have seemed paradoxical to His audience: "You have heard that it hath been said: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy.' But I say to you: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you. . . . For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans do this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens this? Be you therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:43-48). Here Christian ethics of social behavior has reached its climax. The final sentence of Jesus expresses the idea that the Christian, by the obedience to this hardest law of Christ, surpasses all natural instincts and virtues and is elevated to the likeness of God's perfection.³⁵ The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates beautifully this extraordinary kind of neighborly love. The priest and the levite pass by the poor victim who "fell among robbers," and do not offer help to their own countryman. Yet the foreigner, stranger, and enemy has mercy on his neighbor. "But a certain Samaritan being on his journey, came near

Love of
All Men

Social Message of the New Testament

him, and seeing him was moved with compassion. And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. . . . Which of these three in thy opinion was neighbor to him that fell among the robbers? But he said: 'He that showed mercy to him.' And Jesus said to him: 'Go, and do thou in like manner' " (Luke 10:30-37). The parable teaches the new and hitherto unheard-of lesson: "Thy neighbor is everybody who is in need, even though it be thy most despised enemy!"⁷³⁶

Giving
No Offense

b) The obligations of Christian solidarity are so imperative that they demand the avoidance of *every offense* against our brother, even of anger: "You have heard that it was said to them of old: 'Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you: whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca' [blockhead], shall be in danger of the council [the highest Jewish court]. And whosoever shall say: 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:21-26).

First Be
Reconciled

c) Christian solidarity even goes so far as to demand that a man should not approach his God in offering his "gift" if he is conscious that the harmony of brotherly love has been disturbed: *reconciliation* must first restore this harmony. "If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother has anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:23,24). The method of procedure in case of any offense is given by Christ's words: "If thy brother shall offend thee, go, and rebuke him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother. And if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican" (Matt. 18:14-17). The rejection of reconciliation will be

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punished mercilessly: "Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art on the way with him, lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing" (Matt. 5:25,26). Christ evidently refers in His final remark to the eternal "prison" which is waiting for those who do not seek reconciliation. In fact, the restoration of disturbed brotherly love is so essential for the peaceful and harmonious existence of human society that Christ bestowed His special blessing on those who are instrumental in bringing about harmony among men: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9). For their divine deed they will be considered heavenly messengers, close to God.

d) Christian solidarity could hardly go any further than to demand even *nonresistance* and acceptance of humiliation: "You have heard that it has been said: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you not to resist evil. But if one strike thee on thy cheek, turn to him also the other. And if a man will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also to him. And whosoever will force thee one mile, go with him other two" (Matt. 5:38-41). We must distinguish here, of course, between command and a counsel of perfection. There is question of the latter only.

Turning
the Other
Cheek

e) Most of these heroic demands imply and presuppose another heroic Christian social attitude and virtue, in which Christ Himself is the most exalted example — *forgiveness*. The basis of the obligation to forgive is our own indebtedness to God and the readiness of our Heavenly Father to forgive us, which Christ described so impressively in the parable of the prodigal son: "His father saw him and was moved with compassion" (Luke 15:20). Therefore, Jesus expressly demanded forgiveness of injuries in the great prayer which He formulated for humanity: "Thus therefore shall you pray. . .

As We
also Forgive

Social Message of the New Testament

Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. . . . For if you will forgive men their offenses, your Heavenly Father will forgive you also your offenses. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses" (Matt. 6:12,14,15).

Jesus illustrates drastically the wickedness of an unforgiving mind in the parable of the merciful king who forgave his servant his debt of "ten thousand talents," and the ungrateful servant who did not forgive his fellow servant: "When that servant was gone out, he found one of his fellow servants that owed him a hundred pence. And laying hold of him, he throttled him, saying: 'Pay what thou owest.' And his fellow servant falling down besought him, saying: 'Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.' And he would not, but cast him into prison till he paid the debt. Now, his fellow servants seeing what was done, were very much grieved, and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him and said to him: 'Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me. Shouldst not thou then have had compassion also on thy fellow servant, even as I had compassion on thee?' And his lord being angry delivered him to the torturers until he paid all the debt. So also shall My Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not, every one his brother, from your hearts" (Matt. 18:23-35).

The duty of forgiveness knows no limit. Man must always be ready to forgive: "Then came Peter unto Him and said: 'Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?' Jesus saith to him: 'I say not to thee, till seven times, but till seventy times seven times'" (Matt. 18:21,22). When His disciples were angry with the Samaritans, because they did not receive Him into their city, and asked Jesus: "Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" Our Lord answered: "You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls, but to save" (Luke 9:52-56). According to Christ, the spirit of revenge is a spirit

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of destruction and in no way reconcilable with His principles.

By this remarkable teaching Christ did not intend to change the existing rules of civil law, but He taught social attitudes which, if observed, would make courts superfluous—a really “divine” social teaching!³⁷

D. MERCY AND CHARITY. Those two words contain the “good tidings” of Christ to the poor, the suffering, and oppressed; they are the Gospel of help for the needy. They represent the life-giving and life-preserving soul of humanity. Benigni calls charity “the essence of Christian social ethics.”³⁸ Charity reveals the true vitality of religion. Dawson has a remarkable passage referring to this point:

“Charity is nothing else but this mysterious power of spiritual life actuating the will. It is no human will or moral quality, but a supernatural energy that transforms human nature and builds up a new humanity. Nothing gives a more appalling idea of the difference between living and dead religion and of the apostasy of the modern world than the profound degradation that this word has undergone in modern times. It has lost all its vital significance and its mysterious luminous quality. It has become identified with the most external and spiritually barren type of social patronage and ethical self-satisfaction. And in the same way, that great saying of St. John, ‘He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love,’ has been degraded from the most profound of spiritual truths into a sentimental platitude. . . . There is nothing so repulsive as dead religion; it is the deadest thing there is. As the Gospel says, it is not even good enough for the dunghill.”³⁹

These are sharp words, but the sooner human society comes to a realization of their truth, the sooner will its mortally sick organism be given hope of escaping complete dissolution.

In order to appreciate properly the nature of Christ's message of charity, we must keep again before our eyes the supreme truth that Christians are members of one and the same body, the body of Christ, whose life is the life of everyone. Only when we see in our neighbor Christ Himself, can

**The Charity
of Christ**

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we realize the sublime character and sacredness of the duty of charity; just as we can only then fully understand the love and charity and mercy of Christ toward humanity, when we realize that He, by assuming flesh, wished to be a divine loving brother to us. Christ's whole mission was a triumph of charity, as Luke describes it so vividly:

"He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up; and He went into the synagogue, according to His custom, on the sabbath day; and He rose up to read. And the Book of Isaias the prophet was delivered unto Him. And as He unfolded the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, Wherefore He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of reward.' And when He had folded the book, He restored it to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them: 'This day is fulfilled this scripture in your ears'" (Luke 4:16-21; cf. Matt. 11:2-5).

The majority of His miracles were works of charity for the poor and suffering, above all, for sinners. The poor, the oppressed, and the sinners occupy the first place in Christ's heart, and must, therefore, also be given the first place in the heart of true Christians. The Master opened His magnificent Sermon on the Mount with words of mercy for the poor: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). In order to grasp the full import of Christ's blessing for the poor we must place it against the dark background of Jewish contemporary thought. In the opinion of the Jews riches represented external blessing for internal virtue, and poverty was a curse for sin. Jesus redeems poverty from this curse: "Blessed are the poor." But Jesus does not include among the poor those who have an extreme craving for wealth and bear their poverty in disgust; for Him

The Social Message of Christ's Teaching

the poor are those who bear their misfortune as a providence of God and bow humbly before the Lord: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." His blessing embraces all those who are humble, crushed, oppressed, and disappointed, be it by material poverty or the misery of sin, if only they bow in humility and penance before God. In spite of all their earthly needs, they have the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The following three "beatitudes" represent a continuation and confirmation of the first, and together with it illustrate how deeply and thoroughly Christ is concerned with social suffering. "Blessed are the meek," that is, those who, in contrast to the Jewish urge for violence against suppression, bow before God and suffer violence without revenge; "Blessed are they that mourn," whether over the misfortune of others or their own misery of sin; "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice," after a state of righteousness before God, which includes social right and justice; "Blessed are they that suffer persecution. . . . Blessed are ye when they shall revile you," etc. (Matt. 5:4-10.)

The insistent repetition of these divine benedictions shows that Redemption in the mind of Christ was not only the inner transformation of the human soul into a "new creature," but also an entire revolution of former human attitudes in the daily course of human society, a society regenerated in its whole world of thought and blessed with the consolation of supramundane treasures—a liberation of the poor and oppressed. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus offers an excellent illustration of this.

A "New
Creature"

"There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man died also, and he was buried in hell."

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In his torture the rich man cried to Father Abraham for help. "And Abraham said to him: 'Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things. But now he is comforted and thou art tormented'" (Luke 16:19-25).

Love of the Poor

To give to the poor in Christ's name is to give to Christ Himself. To do justice for His sake is to merit His reward. Zacheus, the chief of the wicked publicans, repented and promised: "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold. Jesus said to him: 'This day is salvation come to this house'" (Luke 19:8,9).

How God is the avenger of the oppressed is described in the parable of the poor widow and the callous judge, who only after long persistent visits hearkened to her plea and said: "I will avenge her." And Christ adds: "Will not God revenge His elect who cry to Him day and night? . . . I say to you that He will quickly revenge them" (Luke 18:3-8).

In the eyes of Christ the gift of the poor is of higher value than that of the rich: "He saw the rich men cast their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in two brass mites. And He said: 'Verily I say to you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all'" (Luke 21:2,3). She had a higher spirit of sacrifice than the rich.

According to Christ's program even the obligation of the Sabbath yields to the needs of the poor. Jesus walked with His disciples through cornfields on the Sabbath, and "His disciples began to go forward and to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said to Him: 'Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?' And He saith to them: 'Have you never read what David did when he had need and was hungry himself and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God . . . and did eat the loaves of proposition which was not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave to them who were with him?' And He said to them:

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'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath' " (Mark 2:23-27).

In the glorious light of this new divine message of love for the poor and suffering, we obtain a full understanding of the very soul of all the "Beatitudes": "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7), and the numerous commands of Christ which are grouped around His gospel of mercy: "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy neighbors who are rich, lest perhaps they also invite thee again and a recompense be made to thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:12-14).

In the name of this Gospel of Mercy Jesus said: "If you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks are to you? For sinners also do this. And if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks are to you? For sinners also lend to sinners, for to receive as much" (Luke 6:33,34). And again: "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away" (Matt. 5:42).

According to the spirit of this Gospel He told the young man who desired to follow Him: "One thing is wanting unto thee: go sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Mark 10:21). The same counsel is given in the Gospel of St. Luke: "Sell what you possess and give alms. Make to yourself bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not: where no thief approacheth nor moth corrupteth" (Luke 12:33).

**Treasure
in Heaven**

The idea of special reward, a "treasure in heaven," is, as we saw, always connected with the act of charity. Even the smallest kindness will be rewarded: "Whosoever shall give

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to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42).

But Christian charity must be divested of all selfishness and self-glorification: "When thou dost an almsdeed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee" (Matt. 6:2-4).

The Type of Christian Charity

The great, outstanding example of Christian charity and mercy is pictured by Christ in the parable of the Good Samaritan, who gives his help and assistance even to his enemies: he "bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him." He even made personal sacrifices in fulfilling the law of charity: "And the next day he took out twopence, and gave to the host, and said: 'Take care of him, and whatsoever thou shall spend over and above, I at my return, will repay thee.' . . . Go, and do thou in like manner" (Luke 10:34-37). This portrait of charity has always been regarded as one of the most beautiful pictures in the gallery of Christ's parables and the lasting source of inspiration to humanity.

Modern Ideas of Charity

This noble and divine concept of Christian charity and mercy has in our days been degraded and replaced, as Dawson says so forcibly in the words quoted elsewhere, by a "barren type of social beneficence." Charity has become a "sentimental platitude." Modern "benefactors" suffer from the baneful illusion that by their "beneficence" they perform supererogatory works, which they could just as well omit as far as their moral obligation goes, and they let the recipients of their gifts know that they are deeply in debt for "donations."

Christ's conception of charity is essentially different. For Him, charity is the *completion of justice*. Indeed, He iden-

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tifies "charity" with "justice," and declares them binding with equal gravity when He warns: "Take heed that you do not your *justice* before men, to be seen by them. . . . Therefore when thou dost an *almsdeed*, sound not a trumpet before thee" (Matt. 6:1,2). And in the dramatic description of the Last Judgment He pronounces a terrible condemnation of all offenders against charity, equaled in the whole Gospel narrative only by the bitter denunciation of the unjust and hypocritical scribes and Pharisees. Benigni calls this passage "the sublime page by which Jesus proclaimed that help to the needy belongs to the essence of Christianity."⁴⁰ The passage of the Judgment reads:

Charity
the Test

"When the Son of Man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left. Then shall the King say to them that shall be on His right hand: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; and I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you covered Me; sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then shall the just answer Him, saying: 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee, thirsty and gave Thee drink; and when did we see Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and covered Thee? Or when did we see Thee sick or in prison, and came to Thee?' And the King answering shall say to them: 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me.' Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand: 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; I was

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thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me not in; naked, and you covered Me not; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' Then they also shall answer Him, saying: 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?' Then He shall answer them saying: 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me.' And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting" (Matt. 25:31-46).

We do not concern ourselves with asking why other crimes worthy of hell are not mentioned here, but emphasize the significant fact that in this detailed and graphic account of the Last Judgment just the offenders against charity are picked out as especially deserving eternal punishment, because they did not recognize Christ Himself in their poor and suffering brothers.

The light of the terrible drama of Judgment reveals the need in present society, Christians included, of a profound reformation of the very soul of its "charity" in order that it save itself from ruin and accomplish its purpose. Full well do we realize why the Holy Father in his encyclicals continually insists on the urgent need of the restoration of justice and charity as first principles to our desperate humanity.

CHAPTER III

REFORMATION OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Beyond the transforming principles of Christ's new teaching on the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, the Redeemer of the world created an entirely new order for human society, based on the all-embracing work of Salvation which made man a new creature with a new supernatural life, a new significance, and a new position in the world. The evaluation of the conditions and institutions of human society and all earthly goods had to undergo a fundamental change in accordance with the new spirit of Christ's Redemption. "The Christian idea of salvation was not deliverance from the body and from the sensible world; it was the salvation of the whole man, body and soul, by the coming of a new life. In no other religion is the conception of *life* so central and so characteristic as in Christianity."¹ This new life is the source and basis of all the new values prevailing in the new era of Christianity.

A New
Order for
Society

From a Christian standpoint it is simply impossible to approach the social and economic problem adequately without regard for this fundamental factor in the new era. Although in itself not externally manifested, it is a reality of the highest importance. To disregard its relation to social life is just as fatal as to attempt to explain the return to earth of a stone thrown up into the air without regard to the law of gravitation. New men with new life and new standards require new appreciation.

1. REVALUATION OF HUMAN PERSONALITY

From the standpoint of human reason, all the fundamental claims and rights of a member of human society are based

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The Human Person

on the dignity of human personality. But the claims of natural personality have been sanctified and sanctioned to an unparalleled degree by the Redemption and teaching of Christ. It is not to our purpose here to enter into a controversy about the full meaning of the terms "person" and "personality." Their essential significance is well known. We know that all human beings are persons in the sense of any of the current and accepted definitions which describe "person" as "a substance perfectly subsistent, master of its own acts and incommunicable,"² or as "a singular, complete, rational substance which is uncommunicated to another."³ The value of the recognition of human personality for civilization is in theory readily recognized by all. And it is also admitted that the ideal personality has been almost ruined by the evils of our age.

By contrast to the degraded idea of personality we find the teaching of Christ on this point all the more consoling. We here intend merely to point out the incomparable value which Christ bestowed on human personality by His Redemption and teaching, which elevated humanity above all former conceptions by incorporation into the blessings of Salvation. Again we assert that the ultimate basis of the exalted value of human personality is the *new life* which the Christian receives in Salvation and by which he becomes a child of God in more than a mere moral sense. "The Incarnation," affirms Dawson, "is the source of a new movement of regeneration and progress which leads ultimately to the deification of human nature by its participation in the divine life."⁴ With incomparable beauty St. Paul and the early ecclesiastical writers describe the new state of the Christian.⁵ Even those who do not recognize the divine force of Salvation must admit that Christ created new values for humanity by His teaching on the worth of man.

Above all, Christ recognizes a *sublime dignity* in human personality derived from the inestimable eternal value, which He attributes to the human soul with its free will. Jesus

The Reformation of Social Conditions

brought *the* religion of humanity. "It is intrinsically qualified for this, because it seeks in man only the ultimate, the *man*, the *soul*, and therefore appeals to faculties and needs which exist in every man without distinction of zone and race."⁷⁶ Gillis rightly asserts "that Christianity more than any other philosophy, more than any other religion, emphasizes human dignity and in particular the highest form of human dignity consequent upon the natural freedom of the will."⁷⁷ But with this doctrine is inseparably connected its corollary, the doctrine of moral responsibility — "the only doctrine that makes man master of his fate, captain of his soul, dictator of his own destiny, the only doctrine furthermore that can serve as a sure foundation either for the building or the rebuilding of civilization."⁷⁸ "If there be no freedom of the will, we are in the grip of irresistible mechanism."⁷⁹

**The Religion
of Humanity**

Christ's proclamation of this new ideal surpasses all philosophical religious thinking of the ancient world. The human soul is worth more than all the treasures of earth: "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.) The human soul is more than human life: "For he that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it" (Matt. 16:25). Therefore, the loss of life is nothing in comparison with the loss of the soul: "Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him that can destroy both body and soul into hell" (Matt. 10:28). A terrible punishment will be meted out to those who give scandal, or endanger the human soul: "It is impossible that scandals should not come; but woe to him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones" (Luke 17:1,2). This text furnishes us with one of the most important social principles, that the human personality is endowed with God-given inalienable rights

**Value of
the Human
Soul**

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which no man on earth may violate: "Inasmuch as the human person is intrinsically sacred and morally independent, he is endowed with those inherent prerogatives, immunities, and claims that we call rights." Thus Msgr. John A. Ryan.¹⁰

The highest sacrifice must be made for the sake of the soul, as we have seen from the passages already quoted: "If thy hand or thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off and cast it from thee . . . and if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee" (Matt. 18:8,9). How God cares for a human soul and desires its salvation is pictured in several parables. The parable of the lost sheep concludes with these words: "I say to you that . . . there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that does penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance" (Luke 15:7). The parable of the woman that lost one of her "ten groats," and rejoiced when she found it, has a similar conclusion: "There shall be joy before the Angels of God upon one sinner doing penance" (Luke 15:10). In the parable of the prodigal son God's paternal love is described in terms of the earthly father who bursts out in joy when the lost son returns: "It was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:32). For their soul's sake all men are precious to Christ: the blind and the deaf, the lame and the cripple, the poor and the rich, the employer and the employee, even the despised harlot. They all possess a soul which makes them worthy of the love of the Saviour. In the words of Lugan: "The human person keeps its worth, whatever be the external modalities of its existence. It has its value, though covered with the rags of poverty or the sorry adornments of vice. Even when it is estranged from God, it always retains here below the sublime power of returning to Him. This is surely the reason why Jesus declares Himself, openly and in defiance of prejudices, the Friend of little ones and of the poor, the Defender of the publicans and harlots."¹¹

But since the soul is a spirit, the value and dignity of hu-

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man personality cannot be measured according to external forms, even those as sacred as the Sabbath: "He said to them: 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath'" (Mark 2:27). It is the *inner man* and his attitude that count in the new society. In the Sermon on the Mount He proclaimed the new code for human personality: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Christ does not speak here of cleanliness in its narrow sense, of "purity" in contrast to sins of lust,¹² but in its widest sense, of the purity of the inner intention and attitude of soul, of the straightforward and honest mind, in contrast to the hypocrisy of pretense. Such purity merits the "seeing" of God, that is, the nearness of God. On another occasion Jesus very clearly expressed His attitude toward the mere external cleanliness and formalism of the Jews:

Interior
Cleanliness

"When they had seen some of His disciples eat bread with common, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews eat not without washing often their hands, holding the traditions of the ancients. And when they come from the market, unless they be washed, they eat not. . . . And the Pharisees and scribes asked Him: 'Why do not Thy disciples walk according to the tradition of the ancients, but they eat bread with common hands?' But He answering, said to them: 'Well did Isaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men. For leaving the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, the washing of pots and of cups; and many other things you do like to these. . . . Hear ye Me all and understand: There is nothing from without a man that entering into him, can defile him. But the things which come from a man, those are they that defile a man. . . . Understand you not that everything from without, entering into a man, cannot defile him? Because it entereth not into his heart, but goeth into the belly, and goeth into the privy, purging all meats?' But He

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said that the things that come out from a man, they defile a man. For from within out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these come from within and defile a man" (Mark 7:2-23).

The Inner Man

By this law of the *inner man* Christ demands from the individual person of His new society a new ethics. "It was a new feast day of the true morality, when Jesus set the inwardness, the conscience, against overrunning formalism."¹³ The entire idea of the Kingdom of God is first of all and principally a message to the *inner man*: "Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said: 'The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. . . . For lo, the Kingdom of God is within you'" (Luke 17:20,21). According to the new principle of the *inner man* He says about fasting: "When you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces, that they appear unto men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee" (Matt. 6:16-18). Strikingly does Christ describe the value of the *inner man* in the parable of the two sons whose internal attitude ultimately differed so radically from their words of promise. Both are asked by their father to work in his vineyard. The first son's attitude is thus expressed: "He answering, said: 'I will not.' But afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went." The second son's attitude is different: "He answering said: 'I go, sir,' and he went not." Christ's conclusion is a merciless condemnation of the man who merely pretends obedience and an exaltation of the nobility of the *inner man*: " 'Which of the two did the father's will?' They say to him: 'The first.' Jesus saith to them: 'Amen, I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you'" (Matt. 21:28-31). This is a

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warning well worth heeding to many in modern society who fail to realize that keeping one's plighted word and following one's honest convictions is a duty the fulfillment of which is characteristic of real Christian personality. In accordance with this exalted morality demanded from the citizens of His new Kingdom, Jesus condemns not only the bad deed but even the bad thought, not only murder but even anger: "Whosoever shall be angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. 5:22). He condemns not only adultery, but the desire: "I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Exactly in line with this exaltation of the *inner man* is the idea expressed in one of the Agrapha: "On the same day He saw one working on the sabbath and saith to him: 'If thou knowest what thou dost, thou art blessed; but if thou dost not know it, thou art cursed and a transgressor of the Law.'" Thus, Jesus breaks radically with the morality of the scribes and Pharisees as He expressly states: "Unless your justice abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). No wonder that many exegetes consider this demand of Christ for honesty and sincerity of "world-historic importance."¹⁴ The world of Christ's time evidently knew nothing about it, and modern society has forgotten it.

To a personality in the proper sense belongs that concept much vaunted since the revolutions of modern times, the concept of *liberty*. Christ has granted it to human personality, but in the most noble sense: "If you continue in My word . . . you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). Real liberty and truth belong together in Christ's social teaching. Liberty in the mind of Christ means, above all, freedom from the slavery of sin by which man is enchained by forces contrary to God and his neighbor. The Gospel shows that man is master of his own decisions. He can make himself a child of sanctification or of reprobation.

Liberty
Linked
to Truth

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**Human
Personality
Endures**

But the most important distinction of the human personality, according to Christ, lies in its eternal destiny. All other earthly values disappear, but not that of the human personality, even though it should be preserved for eternal punishment. To the just He will say: "Possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And to the wicked: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:34-41). The social value of this new proclamation of Christ is evident. "In proportion as a man develops personality he feels himself urged also to be a useful member of society. He finds it unbearable to be in it a useless member."¹⁵

**Mystic
Body and
Personality**

But the value of human personality can be completely and fully appreciated only when man is considered a member of the "mystical body of Christ." Although, according to the definition of "person," man is "incommunicable" or "uncommunicate," yet by the mystery of the "mystical body of Christ" he possesses the most sacred relation to all human beings. So far as they are Christians, Christ unites men with Himself and makes them members of His "body," and as such co-operating with every other member of His body; and by mercy and charity the "incommunicable" and "uncommunicated" becomes effectively communicated to all the brothers of human society. What a difference between a social organism based on this concept of personality of a higher divine life in Christ, manifested in love, and the cold social machine created by industrialism today, in which man is treated and valued as a dead wheel, because the respect for the value of the human soul has been lost! In Jesus' teaching there is no room for a theory that regards "men only as impersonal units to be herded together or exploited or sacrificed at the will of a political or industrial tyranny. At the basis of his estimate of the importance of personality was the knowledge that each man was a son of God. His own close fellowship with His Heavenly Father led Him to look upon every man as His

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brother, and to regard him with the same loving interest that God Himself feels in His children.”¹⁶

The law of His society is: “See that you despise not one of these little ones” (Matt. 18:10). Even the servant and the slave are personalities. “An obvious consequence of Christian equality,” Lugan argues, “is that the human being has inestimable worth, and a dignity which all must respect. He must be looked on as a sovereign vested with special powers. Since he is a man, whatever the externals of his existence, the failure to recognize his nature, the denial of his brotherhood, the privation or hindering of his inalienable rights, are thefts and indeed spiritual murders.”¹⁷

2. REVALUATION OF THE FAMILY

The inestimable importance of the family for the order of human society is recognized by all thoughtful men. And it is also generally admitted that in modern civilization the concept of matrimony and family has undergone a revolutionary change. Dawson writes: “Civilization is being uprooted from its foundations in nature and tradition, and is being reconstituted in a new organization which is as artificial and mechanical as a modern factory.”¹⁸ Pointing to the most dangerous change, he says: “Of all the symptoms of change . . . this breakdown of the traditional morality is undoubtedly the most important, for it involves a profound biological change in the life of society. A society can undergo a considerable transformation of its economic conditions and yet preserve its vital continuity, but if a fundamental social unit like the family loses its coherence and takes on a new form this continuity is destroyed and a new social organism comes into existence.”¹⁹ Speaking of modern attitudes toward marriage, he continues: “The only remaining safeguards of family life in modern urban civilization are its prestige and the sanction of moral and religious tradition. Marriage is still the only form of sexual union which is tolerated by society, and

**Modern
Trends in
Family Life**

Social Message of the New Testament

the ordinary man and woman are usually ready to sacrifice their personal convenience rather than risk social ostracism. But if we accept the principles of the new morality, this last safeguard will be destroyed and the forces of dissolution will be allowed to operate unchecked."²⁰ His final prediction is a severe warning for modernized society: "The people who allow the natural basis of society to be destroyed by the artificial conditions of the new urban civilization will gradually disappear and their place will be taken by those populations which live under simpler conditions and preserve the traditional forms of the family."²¹ But he considers it possible also that the State will take care of the affairs which concern the family "to prevent the diminution of the population." In that case his verdict is devastating: "If sex has been liberated from the restrictions of marriage only to fall into the hands of the government department, the final stage in the dehumanization of culture will have been reached. It will mean the end of humanity as we have known it, and it will prove, as some have already suggested, that mankind is not the crown of creation, but is only an intermediate stage in the evolution of an ape into a machine."²²

Non-Catholic Attitude

This is the view of an intensely Catholic-minded thinker possessing the faculty of keen perception and graphic description of things as they really are. Non-Catholics, although they appreciate the value of orderly family life for the existence of society, are far from judging so severely. In relation to the modern disease of society, divorce, Mathews states: "The family is only a partially Christianized institution. Society has always abounded with persons whose lives are far enough removed from complete consecration to the ideals of Jesus. It is dangerous to legislate as if the case were otherwise. Just as human experience has shown it to be inevitable that the state must regulate the relations of the sexes in the interests of public morality, so it has become inevitable that the principle of love must find its legislative expression in the choice of the less of two evils that beset a social institution. Family

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life unfortunately is no more completely subject to the ideals of Jesus than is any other social institution. His ideal cannot be administered legally without causing vast suffering and in some cases imperiling and even wrecking the stability of the social order. Herein the point of view of legislation must always be different from that of Jesus, for it must recognize development in general morality. It certainly is more in accordance with the principle of love and the giving of justice to end a marriage in which either husband or wife suffers from the wrongdoing, not to say brutality, of the other than to insist that the two still live together without such release. It is the duty of love to protect the victims of evil persons.”²³

What was Christ's attitude toward the family of His day? Christ said little about institutions of society. But as to the family He makes a very marked exception, not because “Israel's entire social structure was built upon this institution as its chief cornerstone,” much less because “Jesus' own experience in His home at Nazareth had also revealed to Him the social potentialities of a home in which the spirit of fraternity and loyalty prevailed,”²⁴ but as the Divine Redeemer of society He wanted to renew the family in His plan of Salvation. In view of His sympathy for the poor widow of Naim, whose son He restored to life (Luke 7:11-15), His deep friendship with the family of Lazarus at Bethania (John 11:1 sqq.), His presence at the joyful wedding of Cana (John 2:1 sqq.), His love for children, the statement of some modern critics that Christ was an enemy of the family and family life is simple incomprehensible. On the contrary, Christ was intensely interested in the family.²⁵

**Christ's
Attitude
Toward
Marriage**

The first statute of Christ's family law is that Matrimony is a divine institution, and according to God's will a monogamous institution. Jesus said to the Pharisees: “Have ye not read that He who made man from the beginning made them male and female? And He said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore, now they are not two but

**Monog-
amous**

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one flesh" (Matt. 19:4-6). Even non-Catholics admit: "It is noteworthy that Jesus thus regards marriage as monogamous — not indeed as the result of an everlasting conventionality, but as the result of a divine creative act. Monogamy is thus regarded by Him as the only normal, the only divine basis of family relations. By this reaffirmation of the noble social teachings of Moses, Jesus sets His disapproval upon all forms of plural marriages, whether illegal or legal, as violation of the divine fiat."²⁶ Thus, it is admitted that Christ elevated matrimony from the low polygamous level of His time to its original divine standard. This was the first blessing for the fundamental institute of society.

**Indis-
soluble**

Christ did not stop here. Regardless of the conditions of His time, abounding in divorce, He adds the second note of matrimonial purification and elevation: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. . . . Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery" (Matt. 19:6-9). Here is not the place to enter the famous controversies between the school of Hillel and Shammai on the reasons for which divorce was granted at the time of Christ. Almost any reason, even the most insignificant (such as bad cooking) was sufficient. Neither is there room here for the discussion of the meaning of the clause, "except it be for fornication" (which has been disputed since early Christian days). Mark and Luke do not mention it at all. As the text stands, it evidently means to say at least that separation in case of "adultery" is considered permissible by Christ, but the indissoluble bond of marriage remains and the separated cannot remarry. Hence, this is the decisive point: according to Christ marriage cannot be dissolved even by fornication.

This regenerating law may be partly the consequence of

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Christ's ennobling preaching on brotherly love: "It is altogether within the spirit of Jesus' teaching," adds Shailer Mathews from whom we have been quoting, "to say that the physical is not the only nor by any means the permanent element in marriage. This must be found in the fraternal spirit which guarantees participation in the coming Kingdom. If love is to be supreme between man and wife, there is a union in spirit that springs from more than sex. The moral union of persons must accompany the physical. The love and union of husband and wife is like the love and union of children of a common father. . . . The one essential point is the implication that the family is a moral unit rather than mere legitimizing of sexual relations. It is the molecule of moral fellowship. Not highly developed animals but human personalities form a home."²⁷

A Moral
Unit as Well

This latter element of "personality" is evidently to be stressed more than that of brotherhood. Christ created not only new values but new men with a new estimate of soul values. Men and women, joined in matrimony under Christ's law, possess a new supernatural life which infinitely transcends natural life and its foundations. We shall see later on in our study how St. Paul develops the matrimonial ideal of Christ to the "great *mysterion*." At any rate, we know that the Catholic Church, in safeguarding the sacramental dignity, in protecting and blessing matrimony, based her action on the proclamation of Christ. Christianity gave to the cradle of humanity a divine consecration.

In Christ's view the problem of matrimony is extremely serious: "You have heard that it was said of them of old: 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:27,28). It is quite evident that according to Christ, "Family life is the most sacred of all relations outside the relations between God and man."²⁸ But this is true, not only because "to dishonor this first of human relationships is to loosen the

Sacredness
of Married
Life

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bonds of society, to lower social ideals, and is inconsistent with the love that should characterize husband and wife,"²⁹ but because the violation of the sacredness of the family is, besides all this, a breaking of the divine seal that Christ put by His authority upon the family union. As soon as marriage is taken out of its divine atmosphere and considered only a legal contract, its real sacredness is destroyed. From Christ's attitude it is quite clear that the fundamental purpose of matrimony is not the regulation of sex life, but the sanctification of the elementary cell of human society. "The central consideration," continues Shailer Mathews, "is not that of the relation of the sexes but of the home as an institution. Too much modern discussion of marriage fails to make this distinction. Any proposal to palliate indiscriminate sexual unions by some new terminology is to ignore the fact that marriage is intended as the first step in the setting up of a social institution. It is at this point that the teaching of Jesus gains a new moral application. If human beings are to make biological consideration primary, they are not fully realizing their significance of persons."³⁰

Exaltation of Womanhood

The elevation of matrimony by Christ's teaching necessarily implies also the exaltation of womanhood from an abject state of subjection and exposure to the arbitrary whims of man, to the position of man's true helpmate. In contrast to the lamentable position of womanhood in the ancient world, the declaration of Christ meant a radical revolution of ideas and the beginning of a new phase of civilization. Neopaganism, by changing the Christian liberty of womanhood into licentiousness, has brought matrimony and womanhood back to the ages of barbarism.

Duty Toward Parents

The concept of family life also includes the *duty of children toward their parents*, which Christ brought out strongly by His own example and His teaching. We read in the Gospel: "He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them" (Luke 2:51); and again the touching words of Jesus on the cross: "When Jesus therefore had seen His

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mother and the disciple standing, whom He loved, He saith to His mother: 'Woman, behold thy son.' After that He saith to the disciple: 'Behold thy mother'" (John 19:26,27). In His preaching He reiterates the Old Testament law of Mount Sinai: "God said: 'Honor thy father and mother'" (Matt. 15:4). Hence, He did not establish a new code of behavior toward parents, but cleansed the Old Law from Jewish perversion and distortion and reaffirmed it in its original purity and strictness. According to the Jewish traditions of the time of Christ, it was permissible for children to evade the duty of supporting their parents by a gift to the Temple treasury, called *Corban*. Christ condemned this hypocritical tradition: "Well do you make void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition. For Moses said: 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' and 'he that shall curse father or mother, dying let him die.' But you say: 'If a man shall say to his father or mother *Corban* (gift to the Temple), whatsoever is from me, shall profit thee [i.e., what is due to you from me is in the temple treasury], and further you suffer him not to do anything for his father or mother, making void the word of God" (Mark 7:9-13).

However, Christ attaches to this principal law the important clause that the duty to God is higher than the duty to parents. When He separated from His parents on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and stayed in the Temple, He answered the sorrowful query of His Mother with the words: "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's Business?" (Luke 2:49.) When His Mother approached Him in Cana on behalf of the guests, He pointed again to the will of the Father: "Woman, what is that to Me and to thee? My hour is not yet come" (John 2:4). When a woman exclaimed in admiration for His teaching: "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the paps that gave Thee suck," He answered: "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:27,28). While all these words do not involve the slightest derogation to Mary,

Duty to
God

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as some have wrongly imagined, yet they show that the will of the Father is supreme at all times, even if it causes hardships in social life.

The Little Children

According to Christ's teaching, the most precious treasure of the family is the child, although modern society with neopagan eyes often views it as the greatest burden, and for the large mass of poor families it is the gravest problem. The Redeemer blessed the child by entering into the world in the form of a child, although other ways were open to Him. One of the most touching scenes in the public life of Jesus is the blessing of the children. "Then were little children presented to Him, that He should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said to them: 'Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to Me; for the Kingdom of Heaven is for such.' And when He had imposed hands upon them, He departed from thence" (Matt. 19:13-15). Although, according to the Sermon on the Mount, those who desire to be included in Christ's beatitudes and enjoy the privilege of entering into the "Kingdom of Heaven" must have special qualification (that is, must be "poor in spirit," "suffer persecution for justice' sake," etc.), the little children need no other passport for the Kingdom of heaven save themselves, and that new life which by Baptism is conferred on them. All others must strive to be like to them in those qualities that are their great charm in the sight of God and men. Jesus requires a childlike spirit as the condition *par excellence* for admission into the kingdom: "Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

The little children are so much His own image that He identifies Himself with them: "Whosoever shall receive this child in My Name, receiveth Me, and whosoever shall receive Me shall receive Him that sent Me" (Luke 9:48). Against those who violate the rights of children Christ's language is merciless: "He that shall scandalize one of these little ones

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that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depths of the sea. . . . Woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh" (Matt. 18:6,7). The children were privileged to sing their "Hosanna" when Jesus entered Jerusalem for His Passion: "The chief priests and scribes, seeing the wonderful things that He did and the children crying in the temple, and saying: 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' were moved with indignation, and said to Him: 'Hearest Thou what these say?' And Jesus said to them: 'Yea, have you never read: Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise?'" (Matt. 21:15,16.) For all time Christ's blessing is upon the children and His warning for those who are "moved with indignation"—a divine social warning for modern times.

In spite of Christ's high regard for the human family and all its constituents, there is, according to His teaching, something still higher to be aspired to by those who seek the Kingdom—the state of an unmarried life for the sake of the Kingdom, celibacy. This can never be the common way of life for all, as Christ expressly tells us: "All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given" (Matt. 19:11). But as surely as the Kingdom of God itself is intended for the welfare of humanity, so assuredly this life of self-sacrifice forms an integral part of Christ's new society: "There are eunuchs, who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs, who were made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take let him take it" (Matt. 19:12).

Celibacy

Regardless of the extensive misunderstanding to which these words have given rise, they are sufficiently clear in themselves, and it is consoling to see their significance recognized by objective-minded non-Catholics: "While marriage is good," warns Shailer Mathews, "yet if for any cause it stands in the way of accepting the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven, it is to be avoided. Translated into practical morals, this is a

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call for special self-sacrifice for an ideal on the part of some. The welfare of others, the advancement of society, may require the individual to yield private rights. Whether it is to avoid the propagation of an hereditary disease or criminal proclivity, or whether it be that some great mission in life be the better fulfilled, celibacy may often be the only form of life love would lead a man to adopt. The words of Jesus are a restatement of the familiar teaching of the sacrificed eye and hand (Matt. 5:29). And Jesus Himself lived by this standard, a celibate."³¹

The Christian Social Pattern

Just as celibacy under ordinary circumstances is not of obligation, so sex life, as ordinarily connected with matrimony, does not by necessity belong to the precept of the Kingdom of Heaven. "He that can take, let him take it," Christ exclaimed of celibacy. So, too, sex regulation is not the only purpose of matrimony, even from a natural standpoint. Dawson has well said: "Neither the sexual nor the parental instinct is distinctively human. They exist equally among the animals, and they only acquire cultural significance when their purely biological function is transcended by the attainment of a permanent social relation. Marriage is the social consecration of the biological functions by which the instinctive activities of sex and parenthood are socialized and a new synthesis of cultural and natural elements is created in the shape of the family. This synthesis differs from anything that exists in the animal world in that it no longer leaves man free to follow his own sexual instincts; he is forced to conform them to a certain social pattern."³² This pattern was placed by Christ before all members and all classes of the new society with corresponding rights and obligations for husband and wife, without exception and without privileges for anyone, and as such transcended by far any former matrimonial union and "differed essentially from anything that had previously existed."³³ And it is still preserved in its original purity in the Catholic Church. "If the Catholic theory of society is true, the supersession of the family means not prog-

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ress, but the death of society, the end of our age and the passing of European civilization."³⁴

3. REVALUATION OF PROPERTY AND WEALTH

Prophets of Materialism have always declared that property and wealth, Capitalism and Industrialism, are the chief factors in promoting social welfare and happiness and leading mankind to true civilization. This is the gospel of greed preached by the proponents of privilege and of the infallible bliss of riches—a gospel gladly welcomed, not only by the possessors of wealth who feel justified and encouraged in their building of the tower of Babel, but also by multitudes of greedy poor who hope to find satisfaction for their desires and relief from their low state of life. Amid the cruel realities of modern times the belief in the saving power of riches has broken down, and Capitalism and Industrialism stand in the public eye convicted of much misery and crime in human society. The voices of condemnation echo ceaselessly. Today "we have too much property for power and too little for use,"³⁵ writes H. F. Ward, describing our economics of today as "a system without heart or conscience."³⁶ Ratzinger said well of the ancient Roman Empire: "A society . . . where money meant everything and man nothing had to fall, and it fell."³⁷ The same holds good for our present-day society. If it pursues its wonted course and does not soon turn from the "right of the mightier," it will surely meet its doom. Perhaps it is already too late, for modern men have drunk too deeply of the strong wine: "Power is the most subtle intoxicant known."³⁸

Moral
Breakdown
of Wealth

How do the words of Christ sound in this storm of indignation? Does Christ condemn wealth and property so completely that their owners have no chance at all to participate in His Kingdom?

A. THE POOR. We have already referred to the Gospel of the poor. Jesus Himself, His parents, and His Apostles were poor. His whole life's work showed continuous heartfelt compassion for the poor and helpless. His Gospel is mentioned in

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Jesus and the Poor

particular as communicated to the poor: "The poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5). We must in gratitude extol Jesus, says Simon Weber, because "He restored human dignity to its right precisely in the poor and despised."³⁹ Whereas the general rule among human beings leads them to adhere to the rich, "the noble personality of Christ . . . stoops down to the lowest depths of human existence to elevate the image of God in the soul of man out of ruin and dust and restore it to its original glory."⁴⁰

But did Christ, by being poor Himself and by blessing the poor, approve of poverty as in itself a desirable state of suffering? Certainly not! His compassion for the poor, His assistance of the poor, His energetic proclamation of the rights of the poor constitute an emphatic proof to the contrary. He did not abolish poverty. He even prophesied that the poor will always be in His new society: "The poor you have always with you" (John 12:8). But He blessed the poor in spirit: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:3). He robbed poverty of its sting, of the opprobrium which made the poor outcasts and victims of sin.

At the same time He urged the members of His society to pray to the Heavenly Father that He save them from the scourge of poverty and give them the necessary things for this life. "Thus therefore shall you pray: 'Our Father who art in Heaven . . . give us this day our supersubstantial (i.e., necessary for our life) bread'" (Matt. 6:9-11). He did not tell them to pray for riches, as if He were hereby stimulating greed and covetousness; when He blessed the "poor in spirit," He excluded the greedy. But He bade men pray for their livelihood. Thus, He did not found a "society of beggars," but one which should be satisfied with the necessary earthly goods for living. In that sense He sent His Apostles out with the command: "Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into what-

Christ's Teaching on Earthly Goods

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soever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till you go thence. . . . And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, going forth out of that house or city shake off the dust from your feet." But He adds for the offenders of brotherly love who refuse to receive His messengers: "Amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Matt. 10:9-15). In the same sense He admonished His followers to have full confidence in the Heavenly Father, and therefore keep their hearts free from exaggerated care for earthly goods. The Heavenly Father takes care of the birds of the air and the lilies and the grass of the field. "Be not solicitous therefore, saying: 'What shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?' For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:31,32). For the poor also the first objective in life is the Kingdom: "Seek ye, therefore, first the Kingdom of God and His justice" (Matt. 6:33). Earthly greed cannot be reconciled with the search for the Kingdom of God. "He said to them: 'Take heed and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth'" (Luke 12:15) — a thought of perennial and universal merit.

B. THE RICH. It is surprising how frequent and intense are Christ's words in the Gospel about the rich. Be it that the greed of His time caused Him to dwell on this subject with special emphasis, be it that covetousness is the chief obstacle to the pursuit of the Kingdom of Heaven, the fact remains that a relatively large number of His sayings concern riches, their value and their use. And, what is more important, generally speaking Jesus seems to be thoroughly disinclined toward wealth. But to understand Christ correctly in this it is necessary to realize, on the one hand, what value Christ attributed to man, and on the other hand, how He regarded property in general in relation to the destiny of man. So far

**Christ's
Teaching
on Riches**

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as property in this world is concerned, it is quite clear that Christ declared God the Creator of this world and therefore its original owner, and that all other "ownership" can be considered only as stewardship over the property of God. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made" (John 1:3). Therefore, He can call the world His own: "He came unto His own and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). Hence, man's ownership is never absolute but dependent on the will of God, the Supreme Owner. Man can never own property in an unlimited sense. He has only the use or stewardship of property, which must be regulated according to the will of the original owner or His representative, Jesus Christ.

The decisive principle in the question of earthly property and wealth is the declaration of Christ that man on earth belongs to two worlds: a temporal, limited world of material surroundings, and a spiritual and eternal world. This double destiny of man is well described by Gillis:

"Human nature is a bundle of paradoxes. We may be, as certain biologists and physiologists allege, brothers of the brutes, but the magnificent paradox is that we are at the same time kin to the angels. We confess that we have the passion of animals, but we have also none the less the aspirations of saints. We are slime of the earth and yet children of God. We are poor miserable sinners, conscious of our helplessness and ashamed of our infirmities, but we are also children of God, heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven . . . 'noble,' 'infinite,' 'angelic,' 'god-like,' and the 'quintessence' of dust."⁴¹

As to both worlds man has his obligations. But his obligations toward the superior world are much more grave than his duties toward the lower and material world. Man's spiritual and eternal destiny is absolutely his supreme purpose in the eyes of Christ. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting which the Son of Man will give you" (John 6:27). "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own

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soul?" (Matt. 16:26.) The rich man in the parable who considers his wealth his only happiness, is called a "fool," and the Lord adds: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). The spiritual destination of man is even of higher value than his earthly life: "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; for he that shall lose his life for My sake, shall save it" (Luke 9:24). Therefore the great warning of Christ: "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor the moth doth consume and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also" (Matt. 6:19-21). But the fundamental principle underlying this warning is expressed in the retort of Christ to the tempter in the desert: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

Thus, it is evident from the beginning that according to Christ's law every material thing in man's life, and therefore everything in the new society's life, must be subordinated to the eternal destiny of man and the obligations resulting therefrom. But what attitude, we may ask, does Christ assume and expect Christian men to assume toward the economic realities surrounding them? It is constantly emphasized that Christ did not intend to enunciate an economic program. Yet, believers and unbelievers claim to find approbation of all their theories in His teaching. Hence, "Program" or no "Program," it must be acknowledged that Christ has established vital norms which are concerned with the economics of human society. What was His attitude toward the rich?

WOE TO THE RICH! If we venture to select just a few passages in the Gospel concerning riches, it would seem as if Christ condemned riches outright. "There seems to have been nothing, unless it be hypocrisy, which appeared to Jesus so full of danger as wealth."⁴² It seems an unconditional excoria-

"Hard
Sayings"
Regarding
Riches

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tion of the rich when Jesus exclaims: "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation. Woe to you that are filled, for you shall hunger. Woe to you that now laugh, for you shall mourn and weep" (Luke 6:24,25); or when He contrasts those living in luxury with John, the preacher of Salvation: "Behold they that are in costly apparel and live delicately are in the houses of kings" (Luke 7:25). And it comes close to a declaration of the impossibility of salvation for the rich when Jesus, after the sad experience with the rich young man, turned to His disciples and said: "Amen I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Hereupon follows the significant addition: "And when they had heard this, the disciples wondered very much, saying: 'Who then can be saved?' And Jesus beholding said to them: 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible'" (Matt. 19:23-26).

In spite of all the painful attempts of some interpreters to mitigate this "hard saying" of Jesus, Christ meant literally what His words express. He uses a proverbial phrase, as it was used at His time in Palestine to express impossibility, in order to teach the lesson that it is only by the special grace of God that the rich man can find the way to the Kingdom of Christ. How serious is His attitude toward riches is illustrated by the parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus. The rich man was "clothed in purple and fine linen and feasted sumptuously every day." Lazarus "lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." Both died. Lazarus went to heaven, the rich man "was buried in hell." He cried in vain to Father Abraham: "Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." Merciless was Abraham's answer: "Remember

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that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime . . . but now . . . thou art tormented" (Luke 16:19-25).

A "certain ruler asked Him, saying: 'Good Master, what shall I do to possess everlasting life?'" Christ demanded first of all obedience to the commandments of Mount Sinai. The "ruler" replies: "All these things have I kept from my youth." Then the counsel, though not command, of Jesus follows: "Yet one thing is wanting to thee: sell all whatever thou hast, and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Luke 18:18-22). On another occasion He says: "Sell what you possess and give alms" (Luke 12:33). Particularly strong are the words of Christ when He says: "Every one of you that does not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33). While we know that Christians are not obliged to give up all their worldly possessions, yet they must be willing rather to forego them than offend God, which is the only supreme evil. But more of this text later.

Counsel
and
Vocation

We must refer to that remarkable scene in the Gospel where Christ calls His Apostles. He simply invites them to leave their work and occupation, and follow Him as if it were a matter of course: "Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers). And He saith to them: 'Come ye after Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men.' And they immediately leaving their nets, followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw two other brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, mending their nets; and He called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father and followed Him" (Matt. 4:18-22). A prospective follower asked Him: "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him: "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:21, 22). The call of Matthew is perhaps still more striking as he was one of the despised tax collectors: "When Jesus passed on from thence, He saw a man sitting in the custom house,

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named Matthew; and He saith to him: 'Follow Me.' and he arose up and followed Him" (Matt. 9:9). All this seems to indicate that Jesus not only regards the possession of earthly goods as futile, but that He even considers them as irreconcilable with the apostolic vocation.

Yet, we should be rash if from these sayings of Jesus (which are sometimes too brief and abrupt and at other times not exhibited in their full original setting) we should draw definite conclusions without first taking into consideration other declarations of Christ concerning the same matter under other circumstances. That we are truly confronted with serious difficulties is evident, but Shailer Mathews surely does violence to the Gospel text and forces an accommodation to his own taste when he maintains: "If He [Jesus] is to have influence in the economic world, we must eliminate from His teaching elements which obviously arose from His expectation of the speedy coming of the Kingdom and the end of time. Chief among these removals would be His teachings as to the giving away of wealth as a universal prerequisite of entering into the joys of the Kingdom, as well as the command that His followers sell what they had and give to the poor. Such directions are intelligible if Jesus thought that the world would soon come to an end, but they can never be used as determining factors in the economic life of His followers."⁴³ The solution of the problem must be sought elsewhere. Let us first turn our attention to another part of Christ's teaching on riches which sounds quite different and indeed amounts to an approval of possessions.

APPROVAL OF OWNERSHIP AND WEALTH. That Christ did not condemn possessions as bad in themselves is already evident from the fact that He disapproves of any violation of another's property. Christ retained in His moral code the venerable law of old: "Thou shalt not steal" (Matt. 19:18). He excoriates the scribes and Pharisees for laying hands on rightful property: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour the houses of widows, praying

**Property
Right**

The Reformation of Social Conditions

long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment" (Matt. 23:14). If Christ admonishes to give to others: "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away" (Matt. 5:42), He cannot do so under the supposition that the donor possesses his goods unlawfully. He invited Himself as guest into the house of Zacheus, "who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich" (Luke 19:2). And if He rewards the promise of Zacheus (to give half of his goods to the poor) with the blessing: "This day is salvation come to this house" (Luke 19:9), we can only conclude that Jesus set the seal of His approval on the other half. If Christ sends His disciples out without money and asks them to accept the hospitality of others: "Into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you" (Luke 10:8), He must presuppose that there are people who by right are in the possession of means to extend hospitality to others. In the parable of the man "that sowed good seed in his field" (Matt. 13:24), Christ breathes not a word of condemnation on the possession of fields. In the parable of the talents the owner of wealth is in no wise blamed for possessing and even increasing his riches, and his servants are praised for their diligence in amassing earthly goods: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will place thee over many things; enter thou into the joys of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21). Although the principal point of the parable is the praiseworthiness of working for heavenly treasures, Christ would not use the image of this earthly industry for money's sake if it were immoral according to the spirit of His Kingdom.

INTEREST AND USURY. The parable of the talents settles also the further question whether it is lawful according to the principle of Christ to lend money for "interest." The slothful servant is blamed by his master for his neglect: "Thou oughtest . . . have committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received my own with usury" (Matt. 25:27). The original term *tokos*, rendered in the Douay

**Legitimate
Interest**

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Version by "usury," means simply gain or "interest." It is self-evident that according to this text the taking of interest is approved. But there is another saying of Christ from which early Fathers concluded that it is against the Christian spirit to accept interest. In Luke 6:34 we read as a word of the Lord: "If you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks are to you? For sinners lend to sinners, for to receive as much." But this is not an outright condemnation of taking interest, just as the preceding verse—"If you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks are to you? For sinners also do this"—is no condemnation of "doing good" at all. Yet, just as "doing good" to one's enemy is a higher virtue than "doing good" to friends, so is the lending of money without gain a higher virtue than the taking of legitimate interest. This higher virtue is the typical characteristic of Christianity. It is obvious that usury, in the modern sense, has no place in Christian teaching.

But the present parable, together with several others, makes it clear that, according to Christ, man as possessor of earthly goods has no absolute and independent ownership, but is only the administrator and steward of goods entrusted to him.

NO ABSOLUTE OWNERSHIP. In the parable of the talents the lord and original owner of the money represents God as Supreme Lord of all earthly goods. The servants with their various abilities are the types of men who are entrusted with property or talents of whatever kind in this world: "A man going into a far country called his servants and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents and to another two talents and to another one, to everyone according to his proper ability" (Matt. 25:15). The parable of the pounds teaches the same lesson: "Calling his ten servants, he gave them ten pounds and said to them: 'Trade till I come'" (Luke 19:13). "In the parable of the talents and pounds He evidently meant to define all human ability and opportunity as a trust."⁴⁴ The qualities and talents of a man, his pound, "are from God, and God will demand back that which is His

God the
Absolute
Owner

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own.”⁴⁵ The parable of the unjust steward shows, above all, that Christ “regarded all men of wealth as stewards of the property they hold.”⁴⁶ “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted *his* goods” (Luke 16:1). The man who wastes goods, wastes not his own but that of the sovereign owner. The parable of the “wise” and “evil” servant describes drastically the fate of those who abuse their stewardship: “If that evil servant shall say in his heart: ‘My lord is long a-coming,’ and shall begin to strike his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with drunkards; the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he hopeth not, and at an hour he knoweth not, and shall separate him and appoint his portion with the hypocrites” (Matt. 24:48–51).

Thus Christ takes as a basis for many of His parables the self-evident truth, so often set aside in modern social life, that God as the Creator of the world is the original and independent owner of all property and that all human property owners are stewards who must carry out the will of the ultimate owner. Only by a complete misunderstanding of their obvious meaning can anyone present the parable of the laborers in the vineyard and the words of the householder “is it not lawful for me to do what I will?” (Matt. 20:15) as proof of the thesis that a property owner can do with wealth what he pleases. The householder in the parable represents the Heavenly Father, and the sentence emphasizes the Christian truth that a human being has no right before God to demand, but must accept what the kindness of God is willing to offer. But even if the statement did contain an economic norm, it could only mean that the property owner may do with his goods what he pleases after the principle has been obeyed which is contained in His promise: “I will give you what shall be *just*” (Matt. 20:4).

Stewards
Only

DANGER OF WEALTH. If property and riches in the eyes of Christ are not in themselves evil and damnable, why then the terrible “woe” to the rich? The answer is plainly given in the

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**Riches Not
Essentially
Bad**

Gospel by the description of the manifold dangers and abuses of riches which existed in Christ's time and which exist in our own time as well. Gold and silver like all other material goods are not bad in themselves, but the forces operating in the acquisition and preservation of them, greed and covetousness, are just as irreconcilable with the Gospel of Christ as hypocrisy. Moreover, riches are nothing after all but perishable earthly matter and therefore contemptible by contrast to the spiritual value of the human soul and the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Christ warned His followers to seek the higher and abiding values: "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither rust nor moth doth consume and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure is there is thy heart also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

**Riches
as Obstacles**

Yet, the chief reason for the severity of Christ's attitude toward riches is not that they lack real and permanent value, but the fact that they are a danger to the ideals of the Kingdom of God and its growth. The message of the Kingdom is preached and heard, but worries about earthly goods prevent its growth in the heart of men: "He that received the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless" (Matt. 13:22). The young man who came to Jesus desiring to "receive everlasting life" had obeyed the law of God perfectly. But when Jesus told him to sell everything and follow Him, his riches blocked the way to the highest achievement, the following of Christ: "Who being struck sad at the saying, went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions" (Matt. 19:22). The Apostles form a striking contrast to this young man: "Peter began to say unto Him: Behold we have left all things, and have followed Thee. Jesus answering, said: 'Amen I say to you, there is no man who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for My sake and for the Gospel,

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who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time . . . and in the world to come life everlasting' " (Mark 10:28-30).

How greed for earthly possessions may prevent man from following the call of the Kingdom is vividly described in the parable of the supper: "A certain man made a great supper and invited many. And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited that they should come, for now all things were ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: 'I have bought a farm and I must needs go out and see it. I pray thee, hold me excused.' . . . And another said: 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' " Then the master of the house became angry and invited "the poor and the feeble and the blind and the lame." The parable concludes: "I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited shall taste my supper" (Luke 14:16-24).

The highest principle of the Kingdom is the *Fatherhood of God*. We cannot reconcile undue reliance on riches with trust in God; a profound love of God with the setting of one's heart on riches. "No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24).

God or
Mammon

The parable of the wicked husbandmen contains, in addition to its religious lesson, a graphic description and rigorous condemnation of all those administrators of earthly goods who in their greed forget that God is the supreme owner of all things and treat His messengers unjustly: "A certain man planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen, and he was abroad for a long time. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard. Who beating him sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant. But they beat him also, and treating him reproachfully, sent him away empty. And again he sent the third; and they wounded him also and cast him

The Wicked
Husbandmen

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out. Then the Lord of the vineyard said: 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be when they see him, they will reverence him.' Whom when the husbandmen saw, they thought within themselves saying: 'This is the heir, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So casting him out of the vineyard they killed him. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and will destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others" (Luke 20:9-16).

**The Rich
Fool**

How covetousness and wealth may lead men to forget utterly their dependence on God and their supreme task on earth, to serve Him, is illustrated by the parable of the rich fool: "The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruits. And he thought within himself, saying: 'What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?' And he said: 'This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater: and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer.' But God said to him: 'Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:16-21). "Translated into modern terminology, this is the business man who having made large dividends adds them to his capital stock, but without a thought of the stewardship in which all money must be held and used."⁴⁷

**Poor
Lazarus**

The second principle in the Kingdom of God is the *brotherhood of man*. But greed for riches, selfishness, and love for our neighbor are contradictions. Desire for and trust in riches destroys brotherhood. The parable of the rich man "who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day," but did not see poor Lazarus "full of sores desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him" (Luke 16:19 sqq.), is a most

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impressive illustration of the callous viciousness that is cloaked in the purple mantle of wealth. But the rich man "was buried in hell" (Luke 16:22). Desire for riches blinds man and renders him unable to discern the true value of things: "The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single thy whole body shall be lightsome. But if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be darksome. If then the light that is in thee, be darkness, the darkness itself how great shall it be?" (Matt. 6:22, 23.) In the light of these texts and illustrations of the Gospel we realize why Jesus was so bitterly opposed to covetousness which is so intimately related to possession and wealth.

The problem of covetousness and wealth involves the fundamental problems of Christianity: Fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man with all its incidental problems, and the eternal destiny of man. Greed and hypocrisy equally are enemies of Christ and Christianity. Only in the light of this truth are we able to understand fully the "hard" word of Christ: "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33). Christ does not mean only the material things which man may possess, but all things which gain such a control over man as to make him their slave. The essential meaning of Christ's words is that man must cast off the chains of wealth and power which enslave his heart and soul. In paradise lost man was made the master of the earth and of the animals. Also in the paradise regained of Christianity Christ wants man to be master of earthly things and not their slave. The demand of Christ to "renounce" is equivalent to saying: "Be not slaves of your possessions."

RIGHT USE OF RICHES. Since Christ did not condemn riches as evil in themselves but still frowned upon them because great danger to the Kingdom lurked in them, we naturally ask: What is His unequivocal attitude? It is all summed up in His words: "That which remaineth [i.e., of that which you possess] give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you" (Luke 11:41). The Christian is obliged to share his super-

Purified
Through
Charity

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fluous goods with the poor. This remarkable thought that almsgiving has a purifying power made a great impression on the early Christians, as we shall see on another occasion, and dominated a great deal of their practical life. Benigni writes correctly: "The Gospel clearly states that it is charity which purifies; charity makes the use of earthly goods rightful and salutary."⁴⁸ To give of superfluous goods is the fundamental sense of another word of Christ: "Sell what you possess, and give alms" (Luke 12:33). The command to "give" is one of the most precious precepts in the Gospel of Christ, and one of the most vital importance for the social life: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away" (Matt. 5:42). "Give to everyone that asketh thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. . . . If you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks are to you? For sinners also lend to sinners, for to receive as much" (Luke 6:30-34). "Give and it shall be given to you. . . . For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38). The canon for the right use of riches is contained in Christ's law of mercy and charity.

The parable of the Good Samaritan beautifully illustrates the point: Not only did the Samaritan assist the poor victim who fell among robbers with his personal acts of charity, but he sacrificed his own property to help him: "He took out twopence, and gave to the host, and said: 'Take care of him, and whatsoever thou shall spend over and above, I at my return will repay thee'" (Luke 10:35).

The much-controverted parable of the unjust steward who makes friends by handling his master's property unjustly for the benefit of others contains this clear lesson of Christ: "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings" (Luke 16:9). Riches are called "mammon of iniquity" not because they are evil in themselves, but because they are to many the occasion of evil, just as in St. Paul "flesh" and "the

**The
Mammon
of Iniquity**

The Reformation of Social Conditions

world" are the standard-bearers of sin, although they are not bad in themselves. The follower of Christ is admonished to use his riches in helping his neighbor in his need, that he in turn may help him in a much higher and spiritual way. Property is not given to man for his free and arbitrary use, but with serious undeniable obligations to his fellow man. "Property is bound up inseparably . . . with a social obligation."⁴⁹

The question of the right use of property and wealth among Christians should be fully solved by the application of the incomparable truth which is contained in the doctrine of the "mystical body" of Christ. If all members of the Christian society constitute one great organism in Christ, the body of Christ, then each member of that body has its rights and duties, due to its position and state. That some members of this body should live in undue luxury while others are crippled and starving, is a supposition which would make the "body of Christ" a composition of unequal and heterogeneous members. It is a sacred duty of Christians to keep the "body of Christ" normal and healthy. If Kent says: "What they (at the time of Christ) supremely needed was a right philosophy of wealth,"⁵⁰ it should read in our days: "What they supremely need is a right understanding of Christianity and its meaning."

**Members of
Christ's Body**

C. LABOR AND WAGES. We have arrived at a question which may be rightly called the "burning question" of the age. From one corner of the globe to the other we hear the energetic and often revolutionary cry of the laboring world: "We want our rights." The Catholic Church realizes the justice of the laborer's claims as far as they harmonize with Christian principles, and has in recent years incessantly raised her voice in the interest of the laboring classes. The Encyclical of Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, is called the "Labor Encyclical." The Holy Father's directions in his Apostolic Proclamations to the world have been recognized as of invaluable significance by all nations and denominations.

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Industrialism and Christianity

Thoughtful men everywhere acknowledge the necessity of a just revaluation of labor and of revaluation in the light of the teaching of Christ. "In a social order like ours the consistent Christian will endeavor to base economic processes on a true recognition of personal values, cease to think of labor as a commodity, and endeavor to use whatever wealth he has morally gained in the interest of human welfare."⁵¹ It is admitted that the laborer has been degraded by the industrialism of our age. Summarizing the rise and fall of the laborer in the course of many centuries Lunn writes: "Catholicism gradually transformed the serf into the peasant, the peasant into the peasant proprietor, but this process was checked at the Renaissance. Industrialism has been busy ever since transforming the peasant proprietor into the wage-slave."⁵² Speaking of the un-Christian treatment given the laborer by Industrialism, Rauschenbusch remarks: "It is un-Christian as long as men are made inferior to things, and are drained and used up to make profit."⁵³ There is no doubt that even from a reasonable natural standpoint the condition of labor is in need of a profound reformation, as it forms the basis of our economic life. "Labor is the deepest material cause of economic happiness and progress. Sound conditions of labor mean the welfare of human society; if the life of labor is degenerated the social body suffers from a deadly disease."⁵⁴

What has Christ to say on the labor question? It always has been emphasized that Christ did not write a textbook of economics or a treatise on the labor question. For Christ, man has above all a religious and supernatural significance. Therefore His teaching aims, first of all, to be a religious guide to man's eternal destination. But Christ knows also that man has to fulfill a task during his pilgrimage on earth. He is a member of human society in which everyone has his duties. And Christ has not failed to bring to our notice a great number of principles, be it by His own example, His attitude, or His teaching, by which men are wisely directed how to shape

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and to manage their earthly affairs. What Adam says of Christ: "Jesus did not flee from life nor yet was He subject to life: Jesus mastered life,"⁵⁵ should become the life principle for every Christian, yea for every man: A man should not flee from life, nor yet be subject to life, he should master life.

DIGNITY OF LABOR. The words of Jesus, "I am not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17), are excellently illustrated by His attitude toward labor. The entire Old Testament is, in a marked contrast to the views of ancient paganism, a hymn of praise for labor. It opens solemnly with a description of God's own work of creation. Christ continues this praise of labor in word and deed. He elevates and consecrates labor. He gave to labor "meaning and soul."⁵⁶ Being the eternal Son of God He became the Son of a laborer: "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3.) St. Paul stresses the point that Christ did not only become "man," but a member of the most humble class of men, the laborers, when he says: He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant [*doulos*], being made in the likeness of man, and in habit found as a man" (Phil. 2:7). He surrounded Himself with men who belonged as fishermen to the class of workingmen. The "call to the apostolate means a crown of honor for the labor class."⁵⁷ Whatever other purpose Christ might have had in His miracles of healing, as a matter of fact He restored to men their normal ability to work. He invited the laborers to come to Him for consolation: "Come to Me, all you that labor, and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matt. 11:28). If He exhorts men to "behold the birds of the air" which do not "sow nor do they reap, nor gather into barns," or to "consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin," and adds significantly: "Are not you of much more value than they?" (Matt. 6:26-28), we may feel justified to find here with most interpreters the assurance of Christ that the Heavenly Father will bestow on those who, truly motivated by love of Him, are working for their life's sustenance, even much higher blessings. When Christ invites the laborer to

Christ and
the Laborer

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come to Him to receive His blessing, He speaks as the foremost workingman in the history of the world: He is the Divine Laborer; but a laborer, because He performed the crude and simple tasks of the workingmen of His age throughout His hidden life in Nazareth and declared as a motto of His whole mission and public life: "The Son of God is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. 20:28). By making service the purpose and principle of His own life, Christ at the same time not only made it the purpose and principle of every member of His society, but lifted labor from the realm of lowliness to a most noble position in His Kingdom. Christ's example elevated labor in His Kingdom to a share in the mark and character of the Divine. Labor in the new Kingdom can be truly made divine service by the sublime Christian motives which give to it the unction of the spirit. "According to external appearance it may create a merely material product, but an act of the will, a thought of the soul, are the ultimate fine roots by which it reaches down to the mysterious depth of the immaterial realm of the spirit."⁵⁸

Other Christs In Christianity labor has received a sublime consecration. By Christ's Redemption all the possibilities of a new supernatural life opened up to mankind. The Christian workingman, like every other Christian man and woman, is not only morally inspired by Christ, but if he be a real Christian, he shares actually in the divine life so that his work becomes the work of an *alter Christus*, "another Christ," as he is made a participant in the divine nature. In the light of Christian truth this is not exalted poetry but sublime reality. Christian labor is in this sense divine service. Imbued with this spirit early Christians, as we find in the catacombs, engraved on the tombs of their dead not only their names, but also their state in life. We meet with inscriptions of various kinds of workingmen, bakers, gardeners, and others. "Labor once despised . . . appears now as an ornament of the tombstone."⁵⁹

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DUTY AND THE RIGHT OF LABOR. The duty of labor is implicitly imposed on every Christian by Christ's principle to "minister," not to be "ministered unto." If this is the Master's axiom, the duty of the disciple must be to offer service and labor, not only to accept them. It is a complete misunderstanding of the message of Jesus and even a distortion of His words to maintain that Christ, under an erroneous expectation of the speedy coming of the end of the world, considered all earthly goods and endeavors superfluous and useless, and insisted only on the preparation for the approaching catastrophe. On the contrary, according to Christ, work goes on to the very instant of the *Parousia* and He advises: "He that is in the field, let him not go back to take his coat" (Matt. 24:18). In that hour "two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left" (Matt. 24:39,40). Jesus, although insisting continuously on the higher destiny of man, presupposes the duty of labor in this life as a matter of course and by His own example disposes of any assertion to the contrary. It is a simple acknowledgment of the duty of man to work when Jesus tells Simon: "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught"; and again a recognition of the fact that work is an obvious duty in life, when Simon answers: "Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing; but at Thy word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:4,5). St. John has preserved the memory of a scene at the Lake of Genesareth which as a whole illustrates the principle of life: man shall work for his sustenance. It is summed up in a few words: "Jesus said to them: 'Children have you any meat?' They answered Him: 'No.' He said to them: 'Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find.' They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes" (John 21:5,6). The confidence of the disciples in the word of Jesus and the blessing for it does not eliminate the fact that at Christ's word they had to work for their gain. In the parable

Work
a Duty

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of the prodigal son the elder brother is the faithful son of the father because he has always worked conscientiously: "Behold, for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment." According to the word of the father he will be rewarded: "Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine" (Luke 15:29 sq.). Some of the most beautiful parables of Christ are connected with labor in the field: "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field" (Matt. 13:24). "He spoke to them many things in parables, saying: 'Behold the sower went forth to sow'" (Matt. 13:3). "The Kingdom of Heaven is like to an householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard" (Matt. 20:1). "There was a man an householder, who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen" (Matt. 21:33).

We have already shown that Christ considers man not the independent owner but the administrator of earthly goods. It logically follows that man's duty is to administer or to work with the goods entrusted to his care. The parable of the talents is a proclamation of the right and duty of labor and at the same time a grave condemnation of idleness. The two servants who worked faithfully with their trust receive a generous reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things." The idle servant is severely punished: "Wicked and slothful servant . . . thou oughtest . . . to have committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received my own with usury . . . the unprofitable servant cast ye out into exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:14-30). Although the parable illustrates primarily the religious truth that man has to employ himself faithfully according to his ability for the heavenly Kingdom, it sheds a clear light on the labor question. The action of the earthly lord is approved by Christ as correct, otherwise it could not be set forth by way of

**Voluntary
Idleness
Punished**

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comparison to the action of the heavenly Father at the last judgment.

The parable of the laborer in the vineyard contains condemnation of idleness from a different angle. The words, "Why stand you here all the day idle?" (Matt. 20:6), were answered by the laborer's reply that no man had hired them, but they imply a very important social command: the employer has a duty to offer the laborer an opportunity for work. "The householder went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." He went again at the "third hour," at the "sixth and the ninth hour," and finally at the "eleventh hour." His purpose was not to satisfy his own greed but to offer opportunity of labor to those who were standing "idle" (Matt. 20:1 sq.). "This illustration brings into clear relief the striking contrast between the current economic practice and the principle which Jesus was setting forth. The employer was clearly intended as a type of the truly social citizen. He is interested not primarily in getting his work done and in squeezing the labor market, but in seeing that all his fellow-men have employment."⁶⁰ As Weber says: "Christ confirmed the natural duty of the employer to offer work with the seal of supernatural confirmation."⁶¹

Unemployment to be Prevented

The duty to work as proclaimed in the teaching of Christ is by no means in conflict with His warning not to be too occupied with earthly worries: "Be not solicitous . . . saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:31-33). The prohibition of total absorption in worldly affairs together with the admonition to trust in the heavenly Father and to strive above all after spiritual and eternal values does not exclude reasonable work for man's earthly existence.

Trust and Zeal

Neither is the invitation of Jesus to His Apostles to leave their trade and work, and to follow Him, nor yet the joyful

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obedience of the Apostles, of whom we are told that "leaving their father Zebedee in the ship with his hired men, they followed Him" (Mark 1:16-20), a proof that Jesus taught men to flee from work. Repeatedly we see the Apostles during Christ's public ministry return to their former round of duties. But the supreme principle remains: the adherence to Christ and His Kingdom is the highest duty of man.

The parable of the prodigal son contains an instructive lesson on the saving value of labor in human life which should not be overlooked. The younger son had wasted his whole fortune by leading a life of wickedness. But in the hour of repentance he hopes in the name of labor to find forgiveness from his father. He decided to return to his father's house and tell him: "Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants" (Luke 15:11-19). "Labor becomes the saving angel that leads his soul back to a moral life. These words of the Gospel narrative sound plain and simple, but they are pearls of the moral valuation of labor by Christ. . . . We find here return to moral life and return to work in such intimate relation, that there can be no doubt that Christ sees in labor the fulfillment of a moral duty of man."⁶²

LABOR AND WAGES. The purpose of these pages excludes any discussion from the practical point of view of the controversies on wages which are so lively at the present time. Our only aim is to set forth the principles of Christ concerning this vital question of social life. It is evident from the previous exposition that from a Christian standpoint labor is a service of sublime, even divine, character. But even from the viewpoint of the mere belief in God's providence "labor is a moral activity. It is based on the deepest foundation of all moral obligation, the will of God."⁶³ As we here accept labor, it is the operation of a human personality.

The question now arises, whether the performance of work according to the preaching of Christ is to bring any benefit

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or fruit to those who are working, in other words, whether labor is worth wages. It should be wrong to quote as a norm for the valuation of material labor the word of Christ about the servant who has done his duty toward his master. Christ asks the question whether in practice the master of a slave thanks his servant for carrying out what was commanded him. That He well knew, as He says, was not their practice. Then He adds: "So you also, when you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do'" (Luke 17:10). This is no norm for the valuation of labor as between employer and employee. In the application of the narrative to the attitude of the Apostles Christ bases His statement not on the relation of *one man to another* but on the *relation of man to God*. Man is absolutely dependent on God, and God owes man nothing for his service. Man cannot offer any profit to God; he is always as "an unprofitable servant." Our question is, how work in relation to man is to be valued. Both employer and laborers are, according to Christ, fundamentally equal personalities. If one man does work for another, what obligation arises therefrom? Christ's answer regarding the principle of the problem is very clear, no matter how many difficulties may arise in regard to the manifold possible application in practical life. The case of a man doing work that is evil is here excluded, as being in itself outside the law of Christ.

**"Unprofitable
Servant"**

RIGHT OF LABOR TO JUST WAGE. The fundamental law of labor's remuneration which Christ laid down contains only a few words, fraught with most important significance: "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). "This is a brief sentence, but every word of it is a veritable star of light for the solution of our question."⁸⁴ The sense of it is very clear. The laborer has a *right* to wages. And the basis of his right can only be his work. In all questions concerning labor and wages this must be the guiding principle. It is a principle that is valid regardless of time and condition. In all the fluctuations

**Worthy of
His Hire**

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of time and the revolutionary changes of conditions the word of Christ stands: "The laborer is worthy of his *hire*." It is most significant that Christ did not say: "a hire," but "*his* hire." As soon as the laborer has rendered his service, the wages are already his property. "When the laborer receives wages, he only enters into the use of a thing which is already his property."⁶⁵

The amount of the "hire," which varies according to conditions of time and place, is not given. But it is a misrepresentation of those other words of Christ found in Matthew 10:10 — "for the workingman is worthy of his meat" — to maintain that the Lord, according to this passage, grants the laborer only a "minimum wage," or that which is necessary for his bare existence. If taken out of the context the passage seems to favor this theory indeed: "The workman is worthy of his meat," i.e., of what he needs for his mere existence. But taken in its context the sentence conveys a different thought. The Apostles are sent out to preach the Gospel and heal the sick. They should not take money along and should not receive money: "Freely have you received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). Yet, for the spiritual gifts they offer for nothing they should enjoy hospitality at least. Considered in this textual setting the statement of Christ is equivalent to saying: "The preacher of the Gospel who offers his spiritual help freely is at least worthy of his food which he freely receives." But the text regarding "hire" includes more than food for living.

The amount of hire is to be determined by the value of the work offered. This is clearly affirmed in the parable of the talents: The two servants who worked faithfully received their due reward: "Well done . . . *because* you have been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things" (Matt. 25:21). This certainly does not suggest a wage merely sufficient for a bare living. According to Christ the kind and amount of work are the first and principal bases for the determination of rewards on the part of God. He says expressly: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive the reward of a prophet; and he that

Amount
of Hire

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receiveth a just man in the name of a just man shall receive the reward of a just man" (Matt. 10:41). And still clearer and absolutely unmistakable is the norm of reward at the Last Judgment: "The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then will He render to every man according to his works" (Matt. 16:27). "Quality and amount of work are here the norm for the reward of the Supreme Judge. The principle which prevails for Christ as norm of the reward at the Last Judgment is without doubt according to His intentions also to be considered as a just rule for earthly reward."⁶⁶ The question of justice that would call for restitution if not observed does not strictly enter after a proper living wage has been supplied, but it is nonetheless befitting that, after the divine example, the laborer's reward be reasonably proportioned to his contribution. The laborer, too, may rightfully strive for this. In this sense Lugan says: "No Christian worthy of the name would despise the just demands of the proletariat or hinder its efforts toward a better standard of living. Man, though he does not live by bread alone, needs bread to live; his moral and intellectual life are conditioned by his material life."⁶⁷

This interpretation of the principle of Christ is not contradicted by the teaching of Christ as contained in the parable of the laborer in the vineyard. True, in this case we observe a surprising attitude of the lord of the vineyard who gives the laborers who arrived at the "eleventh hour" the same reward as to those who started their work early in the morning: "And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When therefore they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came they thought that they should receive more; and they also received every man a penny." The parable concludes: "So shall the last be first and the first last" (Matt. 20:8-16). To understand this feature of the parable correctly it must be kept in mind that

**Parable of the
Householder**

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the teaching of Jesus has first and above all a religious purpose. The lord of the vineyard represents the heavenly Father, and the laborers in the vineyard symbolize all men who are working in the Kingdom of God for the glory of God. But the relation of man to God is not such that man has a right to make demands of God. God gives to man exactly according to His own free will. Man has no absolute claim. Christ wants to illustrate the same truth which He proclaimed at another occasion: "When you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do" (Luke 17:10). Man cannot say to God: *Do, ut des!* "I give that You give in return!" His service to God is his duty. Yet besides its religious truth this parable, more than any other, contains such important social principles, especially concerning labor, that it may justly be called the *Labor parable*. It is instructive to point out these principles in their entirety.

THE GREAT LESSON OF THE LABOR PARABLE. The memorable document reads: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like to an householder, who went out early in the morning, to hire laborers into his vineyard. And having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day [*denarion*], he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market place, idle. And he said to them: 'Go you also into my vineyard and I will give you what shall be just.' And they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing and he saith to them: 'Why stand you here all the day idle?' They say to him: 'Because no man hath hired us.' He saith to them: 'Go you also into my vineyard.' And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward: 'Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first.' When therefore they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came, they thought

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that they should receive more; and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it they murmured against the master of the house, saying: 'These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, that have borne the burden of the day and the heats.' But he answering said to one of them: 'Friend I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine and go thy way. I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall the last be first, and the first last'" (Matt. 20:1-16).

Analyzing the various elements of this lesson, we see that they are of no small importance:

THE DUTY TO WORK. Clearly the most obvious lesson insisted upon in the parable is that no man shall "stand idle" in this world, so long as he is able to work. Positively it means, then, the universal duty to work. "Why stand you here all the day idle?" is the question, not only directed to the laborers standing idle on the market place in the parable, because no man hired them, and who therefore were not in fault, but directed also to all those through the ages who are able to work and do not do so. "He did not for a moment encourage idleness. The shirker has no place in the Kingdom of God as He interpreted it. The householder's horror at seeing laborers standing idle is clearly that of Jesus Christ Himself."⁶⁸ "The New Testament doctrine on wages has as presupposition the truth that every Christian is obliged to work for the Kingdom of God."⁶⁹

**Duty to
Work and
Offer Work**

DUTY TO OFFER WORK. Equally plain is the insistence of Christ on the duty of those in the capacity to do so, to offer work to those who are willing to work. "Evidently the householder did not hire men to work one hour at a full day's wage because he was in dire need of their services. Rather it was to him a subject of deep concern that men who are able and willing to work were standing idle. He was one of the first in human history and literature to advocate the

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principle that it is for the interest of society to give to all its members an opportunity to engage in remunerative employment. . . . The householder of the parable was simply in advance of his age, for he stood on an unassailable economic as well as moral basis. If the aim of organized capital or labor is simply to allow a few to fatten at the expense of the majority, then Jesus' principle is not practical. But if it is to promote the happiness and well-being and efficiency of the social group as a whole, then the first and most important task of society is to provide for all its members. . . ."⁷⁰ In the market place of the world there are today millions standing with the complaint: "No man hath hired us." Are Christian "householders" still to be found to hear their cry and listen to the lesson of Christ?

**Wages,
Property
of Labor**

RIGHT OF LABOR TO WAGES. The householder knows that "the laborer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). Therefore he agrees with his laborers about the amount of the wage before he sends them to his vineyard. He knows that the wages are not beneficence on his part but a property of the workingman which he rightfully can claim as his own. With this conviction he tells his steward after the day's work to pay "the laborers *their* hire," and again tells one of the laborers: "take what is *thine*" (Matt. 20:8-14). This is in full agreement with Jesus' perception of the dignity of human personality and His principles of justice as described above.

**The Just
Wage**

RIGHT OF LABOR TO JUST WAGES. The wage principle which the householder expressed to them who accepted work at the third hour — "go you also into my vineyard and I will give you what shall be *just*" (Matt. 20:4) — is to be understood as a norm for the wages of all laborers in the vineyard. The question here is not what a just wage is today — this is left to experts in economics — but what Christ laid down as a principle for the payment of wages. Wages are subject to the Christian law of justice.

CONDEMNATION OF WAGE GREED. The parable insists on just wages, but with equal clearness it condemns unjustified

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claim for wages, wage greed. The laborers who worked all day on the basis of the "just" wage agreed upon, finally complained because of the act of benevolence of the householder to others. The householder rejects their claims as unjust: "Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? . . . Is thy eye evil because I am good?" (Matt. 20:13-15.) "The full-time workers had received the stipulated wage which represented the full value of their services. In the final analysis they were claiming more remuneration than their labor actually deserved. To grant their unreasonable request would be to defraud society, for it would be given at the expense of the entire social group."⁷¹ This latter statement of Kent may go beyond the sense of the parable; but the first part of the quotation reflects its spirit exactly. "The parable of the laborers in the vineyard intends to oppose the greed for wages."⁷²

RIGHT TO SEEK WAGES. Although greed for higher than just wages is condemned, seeking just wages is approved by the fact that the laborer has a right to wages. "The same principle which gives the laborer the right to claim and accept wages, gives him also the right to strive after wages. It means acting in the spirit of Christ if those who are able do not let their working power lie idle, but use it diligently to gain for themselves and others. Work for gain has the approval of Jesus."⁷³

JUSTIFICATION OF LABOR CONTRACTS. The householder "having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day . . . sent them into his vineyard" (Matt. 20:2). It is understood from the express words of the parable that the wage agreed upon was "just" and from the whole attitude of the householder that he did not abuse a desperate situation of laborers and make them accept a contract at any price. Thus, as far as a labor contract is based on justice, it is approved by Christ in this parable.

THE PERSONAL DIGNITY OF THE LABORER. From the fact that the householder made a contract with his laborers it follows that employer and employee meet on the basis of

**The
Free Labor
Contract**

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equal personality. The laborer does not appear as a slave who is forced to work. He works in perfect liberty under a free contract. We may rightly see in this Christ's recognition of the laborer's dignity, freedom, and personality. "The laborer faces the employer as a man of personal human dignity. The honor of free labor and the free laborer is recognized and finds its adequate expression in the principle of wages."⁷⁴

Wage Factors

PRINCIPLE OF WAGE DETERMINATION. We have previously seen that the fundamental title of a laborer to his wage is his work. But the parable indicates clearly that the amount of work is not the only title. The laborers who began their work at the "eleventh hour" received the same wages as those who had "borne the burden of the day and the heats" (Matt. 20:12). Hence the amount and kind of their work was not the title to their wages. What was it? We do not know whether they were in special need, but we do know they did not have the same opportunity for work as the first laborers. They regret: "No man hath hired us" (Matt. 20:7). And we also know that they immediately and willingly followed the invitation of the householder to do work. The conclusion is that wages depend not only on the amount of labor but also on other factors, such as the mental attitude and disposition and the opportunity for work, as the parable clearly indicates. "Here the fundamental principle of remuneration is involved. Should labor be regarded as a commodity subject to the law of supply and demand? Or does faithful, honest labor involve a spiritual contribution which cannot be paid for in money? In the latter case, should remuneration be based solely on the market value of the laborer's product or also on his need and the spirit with which he works?"⁷⁵ The answer is already given in the lesson of the parable.

So far as principles are concerned the parable of the laborers in the vineyard is indeed a brief compendium of the whole labor question and the *magna charta* of labor for all times. Modern Catholic expositions of the problem, as given, e.g., in the lucid treatise of John A. Ryan, echo the spirit of

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this parable. We quote especially this passage on the function of labor: "The inherent right of access to the earth is conditioned upon, and becomes actually valid through the expenditure of useful labor"; and one of the duties of those in power is to offer the laborer an opportunity for work: "The men who are in present control of the opportunities of the earth are obliged to permit reasonable access to these opportunities to persons who are willing to work. In other words, possessors must so administer the common bounty of nature that non-owners will not find it unreasonably difficult to get a livelihood. To put it still in other terms, the right to subsist from the earth implies the right to access thereto on reasonable terms. When any man who is willing to work is denied the exercise of this right, he is no longer treated as the moral and juridical equal of his fellows,"⁷⁶ i.e., he is no longer treated according to the just principles of Christianity, as proposed in the labor parable. Labor has a most important task to perform for the welfare of humanity and the upbuilding of civilization. Christ Himself is the greatest example in its history, its greatest teacher and protector. To violate its vital principles, laid down by Christ, and to cripple the life power which God wishes it to have is a crime against the body of human society and the laws of the Gospel. In Christian society, which is meant to represent the "body of Christ" if truly united to Him as its Head, the Christian laborer occupies a place of special distinction, since his very name "laborer" is the title of Christ, the Divine "Laborer" of Nazareth.

4. REVALUATION OF STATE AND AUTHORITY

Rarely or never in the history of Christian civilization have State and authority found themselves in such turmoil as today. The times are "out of joint." Whatever other reason may have caused the chaos, the main source of the great disturbance is beyond doubt the disappearance of the religious spirit in State and in governmental authority, or the fact that the

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State has usurped the throne of religious power. Dawson says well: "While under the old order the State had recognized its limits as against a spiritual power, and had only extended its claims over a part of human life, the modern State admitted no limitations, and embraced the whole life of the individual citizen in its economic and military organization."⁷⁷ On another occasion he supplements this statement: "The moment that a society claims the complete allegiance of its members, it assumes a quasi-religious authority. For since man is essentially spiritual any power that claims to control the whole man is forced to transcend relative and particular aims and to enter the sphere of absolute values, which is the realm of religion. On the other hand, if the State consents to the limitations of its aims to the political sphere, it has to admit that its ideal is only a relative one and that it must accept the ultimate supremacy of spiritual ideals which lie outside its province."⁷⁸ It is quite evident that also in this respect a revaluation of rights and principles is most urgent. And here Dawson's remark is further to the point: "The essential task is to create not a new State machine, but new men and a new spirit."⁷⁹ But to create "new men" was precisely the Messianic purpose of Christ. The "new men" with "new spirit" need to shape themselves according to the principles of the Redeemer.

**One Ethics
for Ruler
and Subject**

It should be observed again, as regards the labor question, that Christ did not provide us with a regular program or textbook on State and authority, but laid down, as the occasion demanded, fundamental principles by which essential rights and duties of State and authority on the one hand and those of the citizens on the other may be correctly revaluated. "According to His mission," Charles F. Kent observes, "He had no interest in political affairs and plans, but in principles which are obligatory to man in regard to his relation to State and authority. He recognized that the form of government is subject to constant change, and that principles alone are eternal."⁸⁰ Since according to Christ's teaching all men as

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“persons” have the equal distinction of having rights and being bound by duties, it may be said *a priori* that Christ demanded from men in authority the same essential attitudes as from everyone else. “Jesus demanded of rulers the same integrity and fidelity as He did of private individuals,” Kent continues. “In the Christian ethics the only difference between the ruler and the private citizen is that the former presumably has larger ability and therefore larger responsibility. The implication that a public official should be governed by a different code of morals is as pagan as it is insidious and unchristian.”⁸¹

In His parables Christ quite frequently refers to “kings” and affairs connected with them: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return” (Luke 19:12). “The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king who would take an account of his servants” (Matt. 18:23). “The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king who made a marriage for his son” (Matt. 22:2). But it would be unwarranted to conclude anything from these texts as to His attitude toward the various forms of government. He used the term “king,” although it denotes a certain governmental institution, not because He intended to put the seal of approval on it as the only right form of purely human government. It was, of course, the title most familiar to His audience as a name for a ruler, and besides Christ is King, though not in a political sense. “These comparisons in Christ’s parables yield no data for generalization.”⁸² It is absurd to call Jesus an “anarchist” even in that sense in which “anarchy” means an unrestrained “individual liberty.”⁸³ Christ did not recognize this kind of “liberty.” Nor is it correct to call Him politically a “democrat” as some enthusiasts do: “He was the most thorough-going democrat that has appeared in human history. . . . The basis of Jesus’ democracy was a practical as well as theoretical recognition of the supreme importance of each individual, however humble or low in the social scale he might stand.”⁸⁴ Such writers forget that democracy is not the only institution

Christ and
Forms of
Government

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which recognizes the "supreme importance of each individual." Christ was the herald of a new life and new principles valid in any and every form of government. What are those principles?

**Power
from Above**

A. **AUTHORITY — FROM GOD.** The highest principle that Christ pronounced in regard to State authority or any other authority is that it is from God. When the proud Roman procurator threatened Jesus with his authority, Christ gave him an answer which throughout the centuries remained the chief protection for all authority: Pilate "said to Jesus: 'Whence art Thou?' But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to Him: 'Speakest Thou not to me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?' Jesus answered: 'Thou shouldst not have any power against Me unless it were given thee from above' " (John 19:9-11). It is an unfounded contention of Shailer Mathews that these words "do indeed recognize Pilate as a judge, and express submission to government as to any fact of society, but they by no means make the right of kings any more divine than a myriad other rights."⁸⁵ Jesus proclaims that the power of authority is "from above." What He does not defend is the divine-rights theory which ignores the accountability and responsibility of kings. He does not say that the power of kings is always rightly used and infallible simply because bestowed from above. The soul of man is also from God but can become an instrument of evil. Pilate abused his power to permit the greatest murder in the world's history. Through all the centuries he has found followers who have abused their God-given power to commit or permit crime. Nevertheless, Christ's principle still stands and brings the greatest blessing to God-fearing authority. Authority, we may hold, is conveyed to the rulers *through* the people, but ultimately it can be derived from God alone. There is no other source.

B. **AUTHORITY AND INTEGRITY.** The higher the principle the greater the duty and responsibility. Authority which en-

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joys God's special sanction must take upon itself the obligation of utmost integrity, honesty, and justice. The merciful Redeemer was never hard and bitter toward any sinner. But when the divinely appointed authority failed to measure up to its sacred duty He used language which has not its equal in the whole Gospel. Chapter twenty-three of St. Matthew will stand forever as the page of excoriating condemnation of failing authority.

The scribes and Pharisees represented the authority in Israel. Christ recognizes this: "The scribes and Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses." But he condemns them mercilessly, first, for their *injustice*: "For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders, but with a finger of their own they will not move them." They keep men away from the faith: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. Because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for you yourself do not enter in, and those that are going in, you suffer not to enter." They even lay hands on their poor neighbor's property: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment." They seduce others to evil under the disguise of zeal for God: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you go round about the sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves."

The Scribes
and Pharisees

He condemns them secondly for their *hypocrisy and dishonesty*: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you tithe mint and anise and cumin, and have left the weightier things of the law, judgment and mercy and faith. These things you ought to have done and not to leave those undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel." They observe formalism but have no clean mind: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but within you are full of rapine and uncleanness. . . . Woe to you scribes

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and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly indeed appear to men just, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

He condemns them thirdly for their *pride*: "All of their works they do for to be seen of men. For they make their phylacteries [leather belts with parts of the Old Testament Law attached to them in capsules] broad and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market place and to be called by men: 'Rabbi.'"

According to the Gospel record these are the hardest words Christ ever spoke. These eloquent words of condemnation are supplemented by a deed equally eloquent. The authorities of Jerusalem had permitted commercial transactions in the temple of God. The "nonresistant" Redeemer becomes very "resistant": "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves. And He said to them: 'It is written: My house shall be called the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves'" (Matt. 21:12 sq.). St. Luke adds to his account of this incident: "And the chief priests and the scribes and the rulers of the people sought to destroy Him" (Luke 19:47).

C. LIMITATION OF RIGHTS OF AUTHORITY. The demarcation of limited human rights against the absolute divine right is given in the celebrated reply which Jesus made to the Pharisees and Herodians who tried to catch Him by a political question: "They sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying: 'Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man, for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us therefore, what dost Thou think, is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?' But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said:

God
and Caesar

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'Why do you tempt Me, ye hypocrites! Show Me the coin of the tribute.' And they offered Him a penny. And Jesus saith to them: 'Whose image and inscription is this?' They said to Him: 'Caesar's.' Then He saith to them: 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' And hearing this they wondered, and leaving Him went their ways" (Matt. 22:16-22). Although Christ in His prudence did not give a direct answer to His tempters, Shailer Mathews does not do justice to the Redeemer's word when he declares that it "is rather an avoidance of specific teaching than an enunciation of a principle."⁸⁶ Lugan comes closer to the truth: "With apparent casualness He uttered an immortal word which has freed the conscience of mankind from tyrants over body and soul."⁸⁷ Mathews himself confesses finally: "Once grant . . . that 'the image and superscription' on the coin implied the sovereignty of Caesar, and the reply of Jesus would of necessity pronounce the payment of taxes legitimate. . . . It is obvious that any wide application of this text to the exigencies of politics must first of all presuppose the sovereign rights of the rulers. Besides, it is clear that in the mind of Jesus the emphasis was upon the thought of rendering to God the things that were His."⁸⁸ Jesus indeed makes it very clear that the rights of Caesar and every earthly authority stop where the rights of God interpose their veto, although He recognizes rights of Caesar and of authority. Christ told Pilate to his face that he and the Jewish authority exceeded their power. Those who delivered Him into the hands of the Roman Procurator (the scribes and Pharisees) have the "greater sin," but Pilate is also guilty (John 19:11). It would be arbitrariness to the point of absurdity to say that Christ in this and other cases acted as God with divine authority against human rights and excluded imitation. Such a method makes the application of any word of Jesus futile. But He says without restriction: "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also" (John 13:15). The history of the martyrs and saints of the

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whole Christian era furnishes an irrefutable illustration of how Christ was always understood and is to be understood by His true followers.

"No law can hinder the exercise of fundamental right and duties. It can only direct them, extend them, or restrain them within just limits. The inviolable majesty of Right is in eternal opposition to mere brute force. . . . Mere force cannot prevail in the sanctuary of freedom; it may force a hand to signify assent, but it cannot prevent the soul's refusal."⁸⁹

**The Greatness
of Service** D. AUTHORITY MEANS SERVICE. Christ proclaims most solemnly that in His Kingdom a new epoch has begun for the exercise of the authority of rulers and any other authority. Among the Apostles the question came up who should have higher authority. "Jesus calling them saith to them: 'You know that they who seem to rule over the Gentiles, lord it over them; and their princes have power over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever will be greater shall be your minister, and whosoever will be first among you, shall be the servant of all.'" And here He emphasizes His own example which should be the pattern of all authority: "For the Son of man also did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life, a redemption for many" (Mark 10:42-45).

His example in the washing of the feet of His disciples is a practical illustration of this principle furnished by His own action: "Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord; and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example" (John 13:12-15). "Jesus set forth in clearest terms the basic democratic principle that the only valid ground for public honor and preferment is individual service in behalf of society. . . . The supreme duty of them who rule is to serve their subjects. Only he who serves all most efficiently deserves the place of highest pre-eminence."⁹⁰ Christianity may be called the truest "democracy" in the sense

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that he who serves best in the Kingdom of God is higher than anyone in mighty places. This democracy is the most noble aristocracy, the system which places highest those who serve best. "In this respect Christianity is essentially aristocratic, since the quality of the individual is the only thing that matters. And yet, on the other hand, it is the most democratic of religions, for an uneducated beggar who is a saint, counts more than a thousand scholars and organizers."⁹¹ The real sense of Christ's teaching on this point is preserved by the memorable tradition in the Church of Christ according to which the Supreme Pontiff calls himself *Servus servorum Dei*—"Servant of the servants of God."

E. DUTY OF OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY. The supreme principle of the citizens' attitude toward State and authority is contained in the words of Christ mentioned above: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Matt. 20:21). If, according to Christ's teaching, authority is from God and a representative of God, it follows necessarily that any authority which not only comes from God but fulfills the will of God has a right to obedience and support. Christ being confronted with authorities who could not be considered the true executors of the will of God gave us an interesting and important instruction for our behavior toward corrupt authority. Caesar's oppressive rule could not, in the eyes of Jesus, be considered an administration that carried out the will of God. Nevertheless Christ commands: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's," but with this limitation that the order of Caesar must not go counter to the law of God. Christ nowhere urges opposition against an unjust authority as long as authority does not demand a violation of the law of God. Therefore Caesar may request taxes from his Jewish subjects. To pay taxes even to an unjust authority is not a violation of the commandment of God. "In the social order which Jesus sought to establish, not the pretension of those who rule nor the slavish adulation of their subjects, but the simple laws of honesty and fairness that govern man's rela-

Obedience
to Caesar

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tions to his fellowman prevail.”⁹² Therefore Christ did not share the revolutionary spirit of the Jews against the Romans. He preached toleration in their case by “passive submission to the political authority” . . . but not by a “consent which would have been fatal to the religious and moral spirit of Israel.”⁹³ A revolt, even if justified in its cause, could, naturally speaking, have only led to the destruction of the Jews.

We have an excellent illustration of His mind and practical behavior: “When they were come to Capharnaum, they that received the didrachmas, came to Peter and said to him: ‘Doth not your Master pay the didrachmas?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying: ‘What is thy opinion, Simon? The kings of the earth, of whom do they receive tribute or custom? of their own children, or of strangers?’ And he said: ‘Of strangers.’ Jesus said: ‘Then the children are free. But that we may not scandalize them, go to the sea and cast in a hook; and that fish which shall first come up, take; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shall find a stater; take that and give it to them for Me and thee’” (Matt. 17:23–26). To avoid a “scandal” and to preserve the existing order is according to Christ a moral duty, even if it demands sacrifices of the individual.

According to Christ, authority has to be obeyed even if its representatives are personally bad and contemptible. His condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees is well known. Nevertheless He exhorts people to follow them when they speak as representatives of Moses: “All things . . . whatsoever they say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not; for they say and do not” (Matt. 23:3). It must, however, be observed here, that the obedience demanded refers to the truth of the law which the Jewish authorities preached in spite of their internal corruption. More than this, however, He forebade a defense of Himself by physical force against the unjust authority that sought to compass His death. When Jesus was taken prisoner and one of the disciples tried to defend Him with the sword by

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striking the servant of the high priest, Jesus rebuked him: "Put up again thy sword into its place; for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52).

For an age where the principles of secular authority and the law of Christ do not always harmonize, but are often diametrically opposed to each other, it is fortunate that Christ's teaching was given amid conditions similar to ours and is therefore well fitted to give directions for the behavior of His followers. These directions are unmistakable: Authority is ultimately sanctioned by God and comes from God. Therefore it has a justified claim to obedience from its subjects as long as it remains within its own province and does not enter the province of God and demand obedience against the law of God. Christ's norm will be always the best practical guide in any political dilemma: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." What Dawson says about the dualistic state of the early Christians may be applied to our times: "So long as the empire confined itself to its secular functions as the guardian of peace and order, the Church was ready to recognize it as the representative of God, but as soon as it claimed an exclusive allegiance and attempted to dominate the souls as well as the bodies of its subjects, the Church condemned it as the representative of Antichrist."⁹⁴ And so it must be today if the occasion arises, in the name of the Gospel of Christ.

F. OBEEDIENCE—NOT SLAVERY. From the teaching and attitude of Christ it follows logically that obedience to authority, as He understood it, is not slavery. Though His new doctrine on the man's dignity and personality would alone be sufficient to prevent a misunderstanding, Christ's own example is even more eloquent and impressive. He recognized theoretically and practically the authority of the scribes and Pharisees; but He felt justified in exposing their crimes to the world around Him in the most bitter way, as we have seen. He recognized the legal authority of King Herod, but He did not hesitate, when told that Herod had in mind to kill Him, to reply with irony: "Go and tell that fox: Behold I cast out devils, and

**Christ Before
Unworthy
Authority**

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do cures today and tomorrow" (Luke 13:32). He also recognized the authority of the Roman Procurator Pilate, but this did not prevent Him from refusing an answer to a man who abused his position: "But Jesus gave him no answer" (John 19:9). He likewise recognized the authority of the high priest, but He found it beneath His dignity to reply to unjust accusations: "Jesus held His peace" (Matt. 26:63). He admitted the authority of the scribes and Pharisees, but He did not refrain from exposing them in the shame of their own sins when they brought to Him the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1 sqq.).

Although Christ did not deny the rights of authority, His doctrine of the Fatherhood of God over all men, and the brotherhood embracing all the children of God, high and low, masters and servants, rulers and subjects, sheds new light on the relation between authority and dependents, the light of the truth that ultimately all men are subordinated to one great and absolute authority of God, before whose majesty and justice even the mightiest earthly authority is an "unprofitable servant."

5. SOCIAL COMMAND OF CHRIST TO HIS DISCIPLES

In the preceding pages we have gathered the essential social commandments of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. By them He intended to revolutionize humankind, to whom He gave a new life by His Redemption. He intended to create a new society with a supernatural life, a supernatural behavior, and a supernatural destiny. The agents to accomplish and complete His mission, according to the norms laid down during His public ministry, were His Apostles and disciples and their successors. Christ did not fail to announce their sacred duties in unmistakable words: "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men" (Matt. 5:13). This comparison of Christ refers above all to His closer disciples, but besides them to

**Salt Must
Preserve**

The Reformation of Social Conditions

all His followers. Salt is used to make food tasty and prepare it for consumption, and to prevent decay and corruption. By this figure Christ wishes to emphasize that His disciples have the duty of making the truth of the Gospel by word and deed acceptable to all men — they are “salt” for the whole world. They have the duty of averting the corruption of the world by their own example and preaching. If they are to be successful in their task they themselves must be thoroughly permeated by the fullness of truth. Salt that has lost its “savor” is good for nothing, and a disciple of Christ who has lost the life of truth and its inspiration is useless for the purpose of Christ. These words of Christ shall ever remain an inspiration and a warning to His disciples.

Jesus adds another figure: “You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven” (Matt. 5:14-16). “Light” in the ancient world is especially the symbol of truth. Here the disciples are spoken of as the standard-bearers of truth, and are taught not to keep the entrusted truth for themselves but to make it known to humanity. They should be like a city on a mountain that men cannot ignore. Christ cannot mean, in contrast to His own teaching, that His disciples should do their evangelical work only for the purpose to be seen by men; but He must mean that they should have the fearless courage to propagate the Gospel to all men. Men must know the message of Christ if they are to be taken captive by it. According to Christ it is not enough for His disciple to possess the truth of the Gospel and “mind his own business,” but he must carry the truth into the neighbor’s house. The method of procedure in this task consists not so much in words, but in works, in those works which Christ commanded as vital for His new society. “Good works for the glorification of our Father-God in Heaven and for the

**Truth Must
Enlighten**

Social Message of the New Testament

salvation of mankind, are therefore, the ultimate and highest aim of the ethics of Jesus.”⁸⁵

On another occasion Christ inculcates the same truth by a parable “The Kingdom of Heaven is like the leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened” (Matt. 13:33). The leaven represents the new teaching of Christ. As leaven transforms the entire “meal” so the new message of Christ transforms, by the agency of the followers of Christ, all human society.

It accomplished this once! Should modern conditions have robbed it of its transforming power? It needs more powerful confessors to prove to the world, as did the early Christians, that the “Christians are the soul of the world” (*Ep. to Diog.* 6).

PART TWO

SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE

APOSTOLIC AGE

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE IN GENERAL

In his volume, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Rauschenbusch admits, in substance, the glorious character and value of the social message of Christ for this earthly life and describes it eloquently. But he then raises the question: "To what extent were the social aims of Jesus seized and carried out by the Church which calls itself by His name? Did His early followers have the same all-embracing and lofty conceptions of the Kingdom of God, the same passionate love for justice and the same human tenderness and brotherly freedom which makes the soul of Jesus the luminous center of our moral and spiritual world?" He adds: "It would be miraculous if they did." Rauschenbusch denies this "miracle" of history and states emphatically: "But they did not."¹

We shall find that this sweeping statement is fundamentally untrue. On the contrary, as a voice reverberates through the high mountains and its echo is caught up again and again, so the social message of Christ resounds loud and clear in practically all the Epistles of the Apostles, especially in those of St. Paul. The apostolic age is a world inspired by the divine word of Christ and it reflects His spirit faithfully and wonderfully. It is remarkable how, within a few years after Christ's Resurrection, His teaching grows and develops as the mustard seed of which He spoke in His parable. The fire of Pentecost entering the hearts of the Apostles enkindled that great zeal which set up the first shining lights of Western civilization. This is especially true of St. Paul, of whom Kent well says: "His head was in the clouds and he caught clear glimpses of the face of the Eternal, but his feet stood squarely

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on earth and he ever sympathetically walked the path of life in closest touch with his toiling, suffering fellow men.”² What, then, is the message of the Apostles?

1. THE “NEW” MAN

This expression denotes the ultimate dynamic in Christianity. Christianity means a “new humanity and the beginning of a new world.”³ This, as we saw, is not to be understood in the sense of a moral renewal but in the sense of the truest supernatural reality. It means an essential, a quasi-substantial newness. Unfortunately this central truth of

A New Life Christianity is so far removed from the inner conviction and experience of Christians and still more from their practical life that it looks as if—to the infinite detriment of human society—it had been debased to the status of a mere metaphor. Important and decisive as it is for the evaluation of Christian society it is hardly or never mentioned in any modern discussion of the social problem. In the apostolic age, however, it was the *conditio sine qua non*, the first and absolute requisite for the concept of a Christian. It represents the greatest news in the history of religion and mankind, the heart and center of Christian society, its very essence. For St. Paul the word of Christ about the “rebirth” (John 3:3) of man and His promise that He had come “that they may have life” (John 10:10), was no figure of speech but the truest reality in the world. Besides the natural human life and the life in eternal happiness or misery, St. Paul knows “still another life which, although being present in the Christian on earth, is not identical with his natural earthly life, but reaches far beyond it. It represents some kind of an Eternity-life in time, something super-worldly in this world.”⁴ If we should discuss the conditions and needs of Christian society without referring to this central idea we would discard the essential Christian element. Christian society as understood by Christ and the apostolic age is valued correctly only if considered as an entire *novitas*, a newness of a supernatural character.

The Social Message of the Apostolic Age

St. Paul must be taken literally when he says: "If then any be in Christ a new creature, the old things are passed away; behold all things are made new" (2 Cor. 5:17); or: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15); or: "We are buried together with Him by Baptism into death, that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in the newness of life" (Rom. 6:4); or: "Be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2); or: "The night is passed and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12); or: "As sin has reigned to death, so also grace might reign by justice unto life everlasting" (Rom. 5:21). Nor are the words of St. Peter a mere flight of poetic fancy: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that you may declare His virtues who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).

A New
Creature

This newness is according to St. Paul due to the *pneuma*, the "Spirit" which man receives by his participation in the Redemption of Christ; "Spirit" and Christ appear often as identical entities. By becoming a Christian man receives as it were a new soul. He consists not merely of soul and body, but of body, soul, *and* the divine *pneuma* or "Spirit," or Christ. Whoever is united with Christ is another *ego*: "And I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). Whoever lacks the *pneuma* is no Christian at all: "Now if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). Hence the "new life in the Spirit" and "being a Christian" are synonymous terms. Christ Himself is the new life: "For me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Without Christ man is dead, with Him he is alive: "God . . . hath quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5).

The Spirit
of Christ

Social Message of the New Testament

From this new, spiritual, divine life of the Christian results necessarily a new attitude toward this world and earthly goods. Although living in the midst of this world, as a Christian he bears Eternity within himself as the choicest possession in this present life and lives the life of another world in his daily work in this world. "God . . . hath made us sit together in the heavenly places through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Our life is already now a life in Heaven: "Our conversation is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). Therefore Christians should live in this world as citizens of another world with other principles, so that "they that use this world" behave "as if they used it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31). To the Christian all earthly affairs and worldly goods are of minor importance in comparison with his spiritual world and destination. Here St. Paul speaks a most drastic language: "I count all things to be but loss, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

This sober valuation of worldly goods in the light of Eternity has been called the first Christian *Kulturprogramm*.⁵ It must be the permanent cultural program to all true followers of Christ for all times. This new attitude must express itself in works worthy of the spirit. Therefore, St.

The Christian Culture Program

Paul demands from a Christian the highest aspiration and the most exalted efforts. "Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). And again: "I say then, walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16); "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin, but present yourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of justice unto God" (Rom. 6:13). In the name of this new life St. Paul imposes on the Christians an exalted social

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Gospel, the full realization of which would transform the world into a paradise: "Put ye on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another; even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so you also. But above all these things have Charity, which is the bond of perfection, and let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts" (Col. 3:12-15). In the Epistle to the Galatians the Apostle gives us a splendid summary of the social "fruits" of the new life in the Spirit: "The fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity" (Gal. 5:22,23). Every word in this catalog represents a dynamic force in social life. If then, according to St. Paul, man in the new era is a "new creation," the teaching of Christ on the *reevaluation of human personality* has found its fullest expression in the unique language of the Apostle. None of the Apostles has translated the mind of Christ in such powerful and exalted terminology as St. Paul. It is now quite clear that this reevaluation consists not only in an external attribution of new responsibilities or in an addition of new moral qualities or in the creation of a new conscience, but in a profound and essential regeneration and reformation of the totality of man. Christ Himself called it "rebirth." St. Paul designates it as a "new creation," a "new life." Most appropriately has the Apostle been called the "firebrand glowing of the spirit of Christ."

2. FILIAL RELATIONSHIP OF MAN TO GOD

In spite of Rauschenbusch's declaration to the contrary, the great Gospel truth of the "Kingdom of God" and the "Fatherhood of God," embodying the sum total of Christ's preaching from the beginning of His public ministry until the hour of His Ascension, is faithfully re-echoed in the writings of the Apostles, indeed in another, though no less impressive, terminology. For St. Paul the ultimate meaning of the "Kingdom of God" is, as Christ Himself declared it to be, the

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"new life" imparted to men of the new society. Therefore, the message of the newness of man occupies the supreme place in his religio-social teaching, while at the same time the "Fatherhood of God" is described in all its fullness by the new dignity of men whereby they are "sons of God" or "children of God." By no other title could it become more effectively known to the world that God is the kind and loving Father of men. As the expression "Fatherhood of God" implies the correlative of the filiation of men, so *vice versa* the phrase "sons of God" or "children of God" necessarily postulates the correlative, the "Fatherhood of God."

St. Paul indicates this as clearly as possible when he says to the Romans: "Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba [father]" (Rom. 8:14,15); and in a like manner when he gives a full description of the development of the new "sonship" in the Epistle to the Galatians: "Now I say: As long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father. So we also, when we were children, were serving under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of time was come, God sent His son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father. Therefore now He is not a servant, but a son. And if a son, an heir also through God" (Gal. 4:1-7).

The filiation of man to God is evidently the joyful theme of preaching throughout the apostolic age. St. Paul repeats the same idea in manifold variations: "You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26); "Be ye therefore followers of God as most dear children" (Eph. 5:1). St. John exclaims in one of his Epistles: "Behold what manner

The
Adoption
of Sons

The Social Message of the Apostolic Age

of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God. . . . Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God!" (1 John 3:1,2.) It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the immense significance of these texts is not merely a closer and more intimate *moral* union with God and God's will, but, as incomprehensible as it may be to the human intellect, it means a real participation in God's nature. This deep relationship of man to the divine nature is beautifully illustrated by Christ Himself in the parable of the vine: "I am the vine, you the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). The same thought runs through St. John's Epistles: "In this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His spirit" (1 John 4:13); "In this we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John 3:24).

If, then, the Christian as a child of God possesses a new life it is expected that the principles of this life manifest themselves in his actions as a member of human society. A life can be called a normal Christian life only when its inner forces, which are the forces of Christ Himself, produce external fruits which bear the mark of Christ. Otherwise it is either admittedly pagan or is Christian only in name. Since there were in St. Paul's days, as in ours, men who did not copy the life of Christ in their own lives, the Apostle distinguishes two classes of men in this world and its society: those who possess the new life and put it into action individually and socially—they are called *pneumatikoi*, spiritual, men of the spirit, the real Christians; and those who either do not possess the new life or do not live according to its nature—they are called *psychikoi*, carnal, sensual men (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1; 2:14). The true man of the new society is, according to St. Paul, the "spiritual man." The Apostle praises him highly: "The spiritual man judgeth all things and he himself is judged of no man" (1 Cor. 2:15). Of his counter-

**The Spiritual
Man**

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part he says: "The sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14); "They that are according to the flesh [carnal] mind the things that are of the flesh" (Rom. 8:5).⁶

Humility

It is idle to ask who, according to the mind of St. Paul, might be the really valuable and fruitful members of the new society; and on the other hand it is to be expected that the Apostle demands from the true members of this new society first of all qualities worthy of the Father in heaven and of Christian dignity as a child of God. Above all he expects *humility*: "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he hath not yet known as he ought to know. But, if any man love God, the same is known by him" (1 Cor. 8:2,3); "Being of one mind one toward another; not minding high things, but consenting to the humble. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Rom. 12:16); "If any man think himself to be something whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. 6:3).

St. Peter strikes a similar note when he says: "Be you humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in the time of visitation" (1 Pet. 5:6); and we hear the echo of Christ's own words, to trust in the heavenly Father, when the Apostle adds: "Casting all your cares upon Him, for He hath care of you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

Self-Sacrifice

The service of the children of God is *self-sacrifice* for God's sake: "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your mind" (Rom. 12:1,2). St. Paul himself is the admirable example of such sacrifices: "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no fixed abode" (1 Cor. 4:11).

Christians should always live in a *divine atmosphere*: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Like children of a loving

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father they should always be *joyful*: "Always rejoice" (1 Thess. 5:16); "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). Since prayer is conversation with God, Christians should be in permanent contact with the heavenly Father: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). "Be nothing solicitous, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7). They should *avoid even the shadow of evil*: "From all appearances of evil refrain yourselves" (1 Thess. 5:22). It sounds like a compendium of general behavior for the new Christian society when the Apostle writes to the Philippians: "For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline, think on these things. The things which you have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, these do ye, and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:8,9).

Mindful of
God Always

3. THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

The eminent truth that God is the Father of all men and that through Christ all those who accept His invitation to the new Kingdom become "sons of God," in a supernatural sense, implies inevitably the other truth that all men are brethren among themselves in a higher than human meaning and therefore should embrace one another with a love that transcends ordinary human experience. Particularly, of course, is this true of all who are members of Christ's mystic body. In the teachings of Christ this new brotherly love was the central virtue of Christian social life and so it is in the teaching of His Apostles. All the elements of Christ's Gospel of brotherhood—such as justice, a rightly understood equality, solidarity, forgiveness, mercy, and charity—are also the vital forces in the preaching of the apostolic age and manifest themselves as transforming and elevating forces

Brotherly
Love

Social Message of the New Testament

in early Christian life to a degree which history has never witnessed. Lortz describes the early Christian community well when he says: "They showed in their life the fulfillment of the word of the Lord: 'By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another' (John 14:35). They were one heart and one soul, they sold their property and brought it to the Apostles, the poor were taken care of."⁷ The theoretical and practical belief in the universal brotherhood of men constitutes the golden page in the history of the apostolic age. The most prominent champions of brotherly love are St. John and St. Paul. "Each proclaimed the dogmas of the love of God and the Deity of Christ with the clarion note of an assured experience. Each found that fellowship with God necessitated fellowship with one another. Each interpreted the loftiest vision of mystic wonder into the terms of social ethics. Each made every dogma fruitful in the life of this fellowship."⁸ But the other Apostles are by no means silent. These early days of Christianity represent the springtime of the new religion with an admirable religious and social vitality and an unforgettable lesson for all times. "While their Master had been among them He had been the common link which had bound them all together. Now they drew more closely to each other and found in their communal life the inspiration which they needed."⁹

**Christ's
Mystical Body** A. CHRISTIAN SOCIETY THE "BODY OF CHRIST." Though this point is much overlooked in the study of the Christian social problem, it constitutes, as we have stated repeatedly, the basic principle in any discussion of the Christian social question. We owe it to the master mind of St. Paul that this supreme truth of Christianity stands so clear before every Christian as the *ultima ratio*. The phrase "body of Christ" is only a brief expression for the entire fruit of Christ's Redemption, i.e., the new supernatural life of Christ pulsating through every Christian. The practical fulfillment of what Christ's ideal demands of His followers is unthinkable without this gift of His Redemption. Neither can the superhuman

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enthusiasm of Christian life in the apostolic age be fully understood if we remove the foundation on which it rests, the "new life." The outward expression of the new life of the Christians in their daily actions can only be explained by the new life within them made possible by the act of Redemption. The statement of Kent (similar to many others): "The love which Jesus had inspired within them broke down all social barriers, even that of slave and master. They felt themselves to be simply a large family and regarded each other as brothers not only in name but in reality,"¹⁰ just concedes the fact of the greatest phenomenon in human society, but does not explain why such love was possible. This possibility was guaranteed only by the new life which the Christians received.

This was for St. Paul the most sacred and mysterious reality in Christianity. It should suffice to quote only a few remarkable passages besides those mentioned before. In his Epistle to the Ephesians he writes: "I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called, with all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all." After this emphasis on the one body to which all Christians belong, the Apostle speaks of the diversity of tasks among Christians: "To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ. He gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." In spite of the multiplicity of their callings the Christians form *one body* whose "head" is Christ: "from whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of

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itself in charity" (Eph. 4:1-16). The same unity in the "body" of Christ is emphasized in the Epistle to the Romans: "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another; and having different gifts according to the grace that is given us, either prophecy . . . or ministry . . . or he that teacheth . . ." (Rom. 12:4-7). One divine life embraces Christ together with all His followers.

Blood Relations

This doctrine implies that Christians are not only neighbors to one another but that they possess so to speak a divine "blood relation" since they have the same divine life in common through Christ. Although this is primarily a sublime religious truth it is of basic importance for man's social behavior. A true Christian cannot discard the very essence of his life in his social relations and actions. Hence he is bound to see in his neighbor his own life and to identify himself with it, as Christ identified Himself with the poor and suffering: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25:40). If it is true of merely human relations that "No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it" (Eph. 5:29), as St. Paul writes to the Ephesians, then much less can man hate his own divine life, as represented in his Christian neighbor. In the name of this most sublime truth of the New Testament teaching, Christian society should be bound together by the blessed bond of divine love. It is superfluous to point out how devastating the verdict would be if modern Christians actually viewed themselves in the light of this truth which is supposed to be the cornerstone of their Christian belief. All the more, then, for the saving of our vanishing Christian spirit, is this the hour to recall to men's memory the eternal truth of the sacredness of every member in Christ's mystic body, as the fundamental principle of our social attitude. In this, more than in any other case of Christian principles, the urgent need of profound reformation is obvious. The Holy Father

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speaks of it expressly in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. Before the superstructure can be effectively repaired the foundation must be sound.

B. EQUALITY. HOW UNDERSTOOD. From this high point of his doctrine St. Paul draws a fundamental principle of human society, that of equality in Christ Jesus, which is to be rightly understood with its proper qualifications as already explained in Part One. Among the social principles laid down by the Apostle that of equality demands special emphasis since it is a crucial problem today as it has been through the centuries, despite the unmistakable teaching of Christianity. The Christian sense of this doctrine, as taught alike by Christ and His Apostles, through word or example, is briefly set down by Pope Pius X in his Apostolic Letter to the Bishops of Italy on Catholic Social Action (Dec. 18, 1903). The first three of his pithy Nineteen Rules, which are all based on the various social encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII and which "will constitute the fundamental plan of the Catholic popular movement, and must form the constant rule of their conduct for all Catholics," are as follows:

Human
Equality and
Inequality

"1. *Human Society*: Human society, as established by God, is composed of unequal elements, just as the different parts of the human body are unequal; to make them all equal is impossible, and would mean the destruction of human society itself. (Encyclical, *Quod Apostolici Muneris*.)

"2. *Personal Equality*: The equality existing among the various social members consists only in this: that all men have their origin in God the Creator, have been redeemed by Jesus Christ, and are to be judged and rewarded or punished by God exactly according to their merits or demerits. (Encyclical, *Quod Apostolici Muneris*.)

"3. *Social Inequality*. Hence it follows that there are in human society, according to the ordinance of God, princes and subjects, masters and proletarians, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, nobles and plebeians, all of whom, united in the bonds of love, are to help one another to attain their last

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end in Heaven, and their material and moral welfare here on earth. (Encyclical, *Quod Apostolici Muneris*.)”

This rightfully understood equality for all is the logical sequence of St. Paul’s teaching that every Christian is a member of the “body of Christ,” with the same supernatural life and, therefore, in value equal to all the rest. This is exactly his argument in his Epistle to the Colossians: They should “strip” themselves “of the old man with his deeds,” and put on the new, “him who is renewed unto knowledge according to the image of Him that created him; here there is neither gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. But Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:9–11). The same truth is brought out with equal force in the Epistle to the Galatians: “For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:27,28). Christ broke down the barriers between the Jews and gentiles “that He might make the two in Himself into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body by the cross, killing the enmities in Himself” (Eph. 2:15,16). The Corinthians hear the same lesson: “For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free” (1 Cor. 12:12,13).

C. QUALITIES OF CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY. The apostolic age, being thoroughly permeated by the New Testament doctrine of the “new life” and its inherent principles, realized that justice is such a self-evident duty for Christians that it needed no extraordinary emphasis. However, when St. Paul fled from the governor of Damascus, and St. Peter from the prison in Jerusalem, they knew that they tried to escape injustice; when the Apostle of the Gentiles defended himself before the council of Jerusalem, before Governor Felix, and King

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Agrippa, when he appealed to Caesar, he did so in the name of justice. The Apostle knows that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice" (Rom. 1:18); and also "that the unjust shall not possess the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9). But far greater stress is laid in the apostolic writings on the duty of mutual love as the first externally visible mark of true Christianity.

a) Justice and Love. Justice, and love as the completion of justice, are the first fruits of the "new life" and the first cohesive forces of society. In this sense St. John writes: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever is not just, is not of God, nor he that loveth not his brother. For this is the declaration which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and killed his brother. And wherefore did he kill him? Because his own works were wicked, and his brother's just" (1 John 3:10-12).

St. John realizes that Christian love is different from anything in the surrounding pagan world, that it is the outgrowth of the principle of the "new life." Therefore he continues: "Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself. In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:13-16). The absence of brotherly love is equivalent to death; love is the manifestation of the Christian's union with God: "Dearly beloved, let us love one another; for charity is of God. And everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is charity. By this hath the charity of God appeared toward us, because God hath sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we may live by Him. . . . My

The Law
of Love

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dearest, if God hath so loved us, we also ought to love one another. . . . If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His charity is perfected in us. . . . God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:7-16). Love of God and love of the neighbor are correlative notions: "If any man say: 'I love God,' and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not. And this commandment we have from God that he who loveth God, love also his brother" (1 John 4:20,21).

The Charity of Brotherhood

St. Paul expresses the same ideas in equally emphatic words: "As touching the charity of brotherhood, we have no need to write to you; for yourselves have learned of God to love one another" (1 Thess. 4:9); "Be ye therefore followers of God as most dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness" (Eph. 5:1,2); "Let love be without dissimulation; hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good; loving one another with the charity of brotherhood" (Rom. 12:9,10); "Owe no man anything, but to love one another. For he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). St. Paul is convinced that love is the fulfillment of all the commandments. Therefore he immediately adds: "For thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is comprised in this word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The love of our neighbor worketh no evil. Love therefore is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:9,10). He could have written with equal truth: "Love is the fulfilling of the social law," because all the commandments which he enumerates as contained in the law of love, are social commandments, i.e., precepts which guarantee the peaceful and orderly existence of human society. Their neglect would doom the human community to destruction.

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St. James coined the proper title for the New Testament principle of brotherly love by calling it the "royal law": **The Roy Law**
"If, then, you fulfill the royal law according to the Scriptures: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, you do well" (James 2:8).

Next to the "new life" the principle of love is for St. Paul the basis of all actions of man in the new era, indeed "the greatest thing in the world." Therefore he wrote his immortal hymn of love, the greatest praise of "charity" ever pronounced by human tongue:

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious; seeketh not her own; is not provoked to anger; thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things: Charity never falleth away, whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed. For we know in part and prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. . . . And now there remain faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (1 Cor. 13).

It has been rightfully said: "It is (according to St. Paul) love for God and man that alone builds up the perfect social citizen. In immortal terms Paul describes this, the crowning, all-embracing characteristic in his hymn of love. Love's pre-eminence lies in its social qualities. It is indeed the parent of all significant social virtues. No biblical writer emphasizes this fact more strongly than does Paul."¹¹

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b) Negative and Positive Commands of Brotherly Love.

The apostolic age, inspired by the teaching of Christ, and following faithfully in His footsteps, proclaims love to be the great general principle which must hold Christian society together as a sacred unit, to be preserved and protected under all circumstances. The general principle of love forms, so to speak, the constitution of Christian society. But the Apostles have not failed to provide the necessary by-laws for the main statute and to prescribe plainly how the general constitution has to be applied in detail in the practical life of Christianity. We may summarize the apostolic specifications under two headings: First, avoid everything that may break up Christian solidarity; second, do everything to preserve and protect Christian solidarity. The first is negative, the second positive.

The Work of the Flesh

Negative commands. The basis of all the exhortations of St. Paul is his teaching that the new man is spiritual and a member of a society which should be above all *spiritual*. Everything that is carnal is opposed to the welfare of the spiritual, be it in the individual or in society, and therefore must be avoided. On this point the Apostle pens to the Galatians a passage classical in its beauty: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary one to another, so that you do not the things that you would. . . . Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are; fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the Kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:17-21). Every sin in this catalog of crimes represents a social offense, and those who perpetrate such offenses not only violate the intent of the law of God but also that of society and shall not enter into the Kingdom. God does not tolerate social sins.

What the Apostle summarizes in this list of social misdeeds he repeats or completes on various other occasions: "Now put

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you also all away anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of your mouth. Lie not to one another" (Col. 3:8,9); "Fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose. . . . For know you this and understand that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person . . . hath inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words. For because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. . . . Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them . . ." (Eph. 5:3-11); "Let us not be made desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26); Christians should not be "puffed up against the other. . . . For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received? Why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:6,7.) "Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9,10); "Let us not judge one another any more. But judge this rather that you put not a stumblingblock or a scandal in your brother's way" (Rom. 14:13). "This is the will of God . . . that no man overreach nor circumvent his brother in business; because the Lord is the avenger of all these things" (1 Thess. 4:3-6). For the sake of brotherhood the Apostle advises to omit even things which are by no means bad in themselves; in his view: "It is good not to eat flesh and not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended or scandalized or made weak" (Rom. 14:21). St. Peter repeats St. Paul's words almost to the letter when he says: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things" (1 Pet. 4:15).

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Whence
Wars and
Contentions?

We may add some warnings of St. James with a truly Pauline note: "If you have bitter zeal, and there be contentions in your hearts, glory not, and be not liars against the truth; for this is not wisdom, descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and contention is, there is inconstancy and every evil work" (James 3:14-16); "From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, from your concupiscences which war in your members? You covet and have not; you kill and envy and cannot obtain; you contend and war, and you have not . . ." (James 4:1,2). "Grudge not, brethren, one against another, that you may not be judged" (James 5:9).

Thus throughout the apostolic age we hear the unceasing prohibition: Thou shalt do nothing that might disturb the sacred solidarity of human society.

Social
Behavior

Positive commands. The negative commands are supplemented by a number of positive directions for general social behavior in the name of brotherly love. The basis for St. Paul's teaching on this subject is again his doctrine of the spiritual man as opposed to the carnal man. As he gives in the Epistle to the Galatians a list of the sinister carnal forces leading to social destruction, so he adds in the same Epistle a series of elevating spiritual forces operating for the welfare of society: "The fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. . . . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-25). It is obvious that in this catalog as well every virtue is of social importance. The content of this rather programmatic declaration repeats itself in a great variety of social directions.

All Things
to All Men

In the Epistle to the Colossians the Apostle writes in the same strain: "Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another; even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also. But above

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all these things have charity which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts . . ." (Col. 3:12-15). In the Epistle to the Ephesians he exhorts: "Walk, then, children of the light; for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice and truth" (Eph. 5:8,9). In the Epistle to the Galatians he recommends kindness and patience with a failing brother: "If a man be overtaken in any fault, you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:1,2). As Christ demanded from His followers service to all men, so also does St. Paul: "In doing good let us not fail. For in due time we shall reap, not failing. Therefore, whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:9,10). He proposes himself as an example for such service: "Whereas I was free as to all, I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more. And I became to the Jews a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as if I were under the law . . . that I might gain them that were under the law. To them that were without the law, as if I were without the law . . . that I might gain them that were without the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I became all things to all men that I might save all" (1 Cor. 9:19-22); "Be without offense to the Jews and to the Gentiles and to the Church of God, as I also in all things please all men, not seeking that which is profitable to myself, but to many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor. 10:33); "The Kingdom of God" is for the Apostle "justice, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he, that in this serveth Christ, pleaseth God and is approved of men. Therefore let us follow after the things that are of peace, and keep the things that are of edification one toward another" (Rom. 14:17-19); "We that are stronger, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of you please his neighbor unto good,

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to edification" (Rom. 15:1,2). The words of St. James breathe the same spirit: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show by a good conversation, his work in the meekness of wisdom. . . . The wisdom that is from above first indeed is chaste, then peaceable, modest, easy to be persuaded, consenting to the good, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging, without dissimulation. And the fruit of justice is sown in peace to them that make peace" (James 3:13-18).

The solidarity of the new society even demands suffering; "Why do you not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourself to be defrauded?" (1 Cor. 6:7.) St. Peter writes to the same effect: "If you partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice that when His glory shall be revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:13).

"TABLES OF THE SOCIAL LAW." Although St. Paul, as Christ Himself, never composed a complete social program, yet he sometimes summarizes in the fullness of his heart the negative and positive commands of brotherly love in such an impressive and forceful way that we might call such passages "tables of the social law," representing a social program, or a compendium of social precepts.

Such a compendium we possess in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbor; for we are members one of another. Be angry, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger. Give not place to the devil. He that stole, let him now steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need. Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth, but that which is good, to the edification of faith, that it may administer grace to the hearers. . . . Let all bitterness and anger, and indignation and clamor and blasphemy be put away from you, with all malice.

**Apostolic
Social
Programs**

**1. To the
Ephesians**

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And be ye kind one to another, merciful, forgiving one another, even as God hath forgiven you in Christ" (Eph. 4:23-32).

Another example is found in the Epistle to the Romans. Basing his exhortation on the truth that every moral function in life is the function of a member of the "body of Christ" he exhorts: "He that giveth, with simplicity; he that ruleth, with carefulness; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good. Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honor preventing one another. In carefulness not slothful; in spirit fervent; serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; instant in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the saints; pursuing hospitality. Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep; being of one mind one toward another; not minding high things, but consenting to the humble. Be not wise in your own conceits; to no man rendering evil for evil; providing good things not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men. If it be possible as much as is in you, having peace with all men. Revenge not yourselves, my dearly beloved, but give place unto wrath, for it is written: Revenge is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. But if thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him to drink. For doing this thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good" (Rom. 12:8-21).

2. To the
Romans

A similar declaration is contained in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians (5:11-18):

"Comfort one another, and edify one another, as you also do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that you esteem them more abundantly in charity for their work's sake. Have peace with them. And we beseech you, brethren, rebuke the unquiet, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none

3. To the
Thessalonians

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render evil for evil to any man, but ever follow that which is good toward each other, and toward all men. Always rejoice. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all."

We come upon the same complex of thoughts in the Epistle to the Philippians:

4. To the Philippians

"If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of charity, if any society of the spirit, if any bowels of commiseration, fulfill ye my joy, that you be of one mind, having the same charity, being of one accord, agreeing in sentiment. Let nothing be done through contention neither by vainglory, but in humility let each esteem others better than themselves; each one not considering the things that are his own, but those that are other men's" (Phil. 2:1-4).

5. St. Peter's

St. Peter also speaks according to the manner of St. Paul: "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, being lovers of the brotherhood, merciful, modest, humble; not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. . . . For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him decline from evil and do good; let him seek after peace and pursue it. Because the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ears unto their prayers; but the countenance of the Lord upon them that do evil things" (1 Pet. 3:8-12).

These testimonies of the apostolic age bring before our mind an entire realm of social-mindedness, though we must frankly concede that these memorable maxims of the oldest Christian community seem to have sunk into oblivion in the minds of many modern Christians. The fundamental cause of the deplorable breakdown of true charity in the modern Christian world is the fact that while the apostolic age took the command of Christ as a sacred obligation which no one might shirk, the modern mind too often looks upon it at best as a beautiful counsel or a charming figure of speech. A modern author has described the attitude of the average

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modern Christian fairly accurately in these glowing words of an imaginary self-confession:

"Justice obliges me, whereas by *my charities* I like obliging others.

Justice is worth no gratitude to me, whereas *my charity* brings me *at least* respect.

Justice is a payment, *my charity* is an investment.

Justice leaves me only the satisfaction of having done my duty, *my charity* gives me the pride of having exceeded it.

Justice makes me only an honest man, *my charity* consecrates me as a benefactor.

Justice does not choose its object, *my charity* carefully sifts its subject.

Justice is of continual obligation, *my charity* picks its day.

Justice proceeds to the very end, *my charity* up to a certain point.

Justice is everthreatening, *my charity* all smiles.

Justice has no trumpet, but *my charity* has violins."¹²

c) *Works of Charity*. The climax of the message of social love in the apostolic age is reached in its fervent preaching of works of charity and in its actual performance of such works.

The example of Christ Himself was the force that inspired primitive Christianity to charity in word and deed, as St. Peter implies when he says: "Jesus of Nazareth . . . who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

The general principle of brotherly love which the Apostles preached so urgently and eloquently, indirectly postulates works of charity in the sense of material help for the needy. Nevertheless our documents speak directly and expressly of such works as the necessary fruits of love. St. Paul admonishes the Romans that they should be "communicating to the necessities of the saints; pursuing hospitality" (Rom. 12:13); he writes to the Corinthians: "Let no man seek his own, but that which is another's" (1 Cor. 10:24); he says to the Ephesians

A Modern
Charity
Program

The Fruits
of Love

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that a man should work "with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need" (Eph. 4:28); he praises the churches in Macedonia for their contribution to the collection for the poor in Jerusalem: "According to their power . . . and beyond their power they were willing" (2 Cor. 8:3); he expects that the Corinthians will be liberal in their contribution: "He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly; and he who soweth in blessings, shall also reap blessings. Everyone as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness or of necessity: For God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:6,7). When the Apostle went with Barnabas on his missionary journey they were admonished by the elder Apostles to help the poor: "that we should be mindful of the poor, which same thing also I was careful to do" (Gal. 2:10). St. Paul himself gratefully accepted support when in need: "I have all, and abound; I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things you sent, an odor of sweetness, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing God" (Phil. 4:18).

The Mantle of Charity

The teaching of Christ that by almsgiving man may atone for his sins is carried over into the apostolic age. St. Peter writes in his Epistle: "Before all things have a constant mutual charity among yourselves; for charity covereth a multitude of sins. Using hospitality one toward another without murmuring. As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:8-10). Throughout the period of early Christianity hospitality remained a highly prized virtue among the faithful.

The Advocate of the Poor

As we might expect, St. James, the energetic preacher of the necessity of good works, who wrote the warning: "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22), is especially emphatic on this point. For him practical charity is the exponent of true religion: "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and

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widows in their tribulations, and to keep one's self unspotted from this world" (James 1:27).

He is the fearless advocate of the poor: "If there shall come into your assembly a man having a golden ring, in fine apparel, and there shall come in also a poor man in mean attire; and you have respect to him that is clothed with the fine apparel and shall say to him: Sit thou here well: but say to the poor man: Stand you there, or sit under my footstool! Do you not judge within yourselves and are become judges of unjust thoughts? Hearken, my dearest brethren: hath not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him? But you have dishonored the poor man" (James 2:2-6). "If a brother or sister be naked, and want daily food, and one of you say to them: Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled, yet give them not those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it profit? So faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself" (James 2:15-17). It is no worse to reject this condemnation of the uncharitable Christian together with the entire Epistle, as Luther did, than accept it religiously in theory and act to the contrary, as many modern Christians do. Real Christian social charity considers the helping of the poor as a duty of faith.

d) *Institutions of Charity.* The most remarkable and unparalleled manifestation of practical brotherhood in the apostolic age is the organized life of charity as represented in the *Agape* or the "charity feast," in the establishment of some kind of voluntary communication of property, and in the institution of a special "deaconship" for the administration of charitable works.

**Charity in
Apostolic Age**

The existence of the former two is evident from the beautiful description of the life of the early community in the Acts: "They were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread and in prayers. . . . And all they that believed were together and had all things in common. Their possessions and goods they sold and

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divided them to all, according as everyone had need. And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:42-47).

The Love Feast

Agape. Whatever the meaning of "breaking bread" may be, the expression "they took their meat with gladness" shows clearly enough that the fraternal community of Jerusalem gathered daily for the family meal. Although this enthusiastic brotherly partnership even in daily meals could have been only a temporary institution in a small community, and although it easily could lead to abuses which St. Paul reprimanded in his Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 2:20 sqq.), it nevertheless stands out for all times as a glorious example of practical, all-embracing brotherly love and in its underlying principle ever remains a most effective practical lesson in charity to the poor.

An Early Christian Charity Fund

The "communication of property" in the early community must be understood within the limits indicated by the report of the Acts. On the one hand it is certain that religious enthusiasm and the deep sense for the obligation of the law of charity induced Christians to sell their property to assist the needy: "The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that aught of the things which he possessed, was his own. But all these things were common unto them . . . neither was there anyone needy among them. For as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the Apostles. And distribution was made to everyone according as he had need. And Joseph, who, by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas . . . having land, sold it, and brought the price, and laid it at the feet of the Apostles" (Acts 4:32-37). But on the other hand it is obvious from the narrative about Ananias and Saphira that this selling of goods for the benefit of the suffering was a voluntary act of generosity. Ananias and Saphira secretly

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kept a part of the price they had received for their property and thereby "lied to the Holy Ghost." The reprimand of St. Peter makes the case quite clear: "Whilst it remained, did it not remain to thee? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied to men, but to God" (Acts 5:4). Ananias was free to keep his property; but he was not free to deceive the Apostles. In the light of the Ananias episode it is almost absurd to claim for the early Christian community, Communism in a modern sense with its compulsory communication of property, not to speak of its other destructive principles. There may be some truth in the statement of Mathews: "As a matter of fact, it would seem that this sharing of wealth in Jerusalem was simply an expression of natural enthusiasm and Christian love."¹³ But this is not all the truth. Kent speaks more to the point when he declares that "the economic life of the Jerusalem community was not regulated by an arbitrary, communistic principle but by the more powerful forces of brotherly love and of loyalty to the fraternal community which Jesus had inspired in the hearts of His followers."¹⁴ But in spite of his emphasis on "brotherly love" and "loyalty" he hardly does full justice to the narration in the Acts. Nor is the remark of Rauschenbusch entirely out of place: "It is amusing to note how our popular expositors treat this Christian communism today. They approach it with a sort of deprecatory admiration. It is so useful for proving how noble and loving Christianity was, but it is so awkward if anybody should draw the conclusion that we today ought to share our property."¹⁵ Communism would expropriate the owners by methods of violence and bloodshed, while Christianity responded to the free appeal of love. The evidence is given us of the "freedom" of Ananias concerning his property, while at the same time the author of the Acts makes no less apparent the true Christian spirit exhibited in the testimony he offers that: "The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that aught of the things

**Communism
versus
Christianity**

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which he possessed was his own. But all things were common unto them" (Acts 4:32).

Modern Communism is based on entirely different principles and aims at entirely different purposes. On its economic side it consists essentially in the common ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, while on its philosophic side it embraces historic Materialism, which is essentially Atheism.

Hence, although Communism in a modern sense is a fallacy, Christian "Communitarianism," or the principle of voluntary sharing in Christian brotherly love, as some courageous modern Catholic pioneers advocate it (cf. the *Catholic Worker*), is the need of the hour. It might be impossible to imitate the ideal community, established by the Jesuits in Paraguay in the seventeenth century, which could glory: "Old age, widowhood, orphanship, were provided for without the disgrace of charity or the lowering of morals due to being on relief."¹⁶ But the spirit which created that ideal community must be the creative motive in the present era of reconstruction. True Christian charity does not mean taking from others to give, but giving to others by taking from one's own.

The attitude and behavior of the first community teaches the memorable lesson for all times: that everyone has a right to share in earthly goods and that charity for the poor and needy is not an optional social pleasure, but a grave social duty. As the Holy Father says in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*: "A man's superfluous income is not left entirely to his own directions. On the contrary, the grave obligations of charity, beneficence and liberality which rest upon the wealthy are constantly insisted upon in telling words by Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church."

THE FIRST ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE FOR CHARITY WORK. The establishment of a special office in the primitive Church for the performance of works of charity is an astonishing phenomenon in itself. But it is still more surprising that this peculiar office, although not identical with the dignity of the

The Social Message of the Apostolic Age

apostolate, appears intimately connected with the apostolic college and constitutes a particular rank and position of honor, to be conferred by the Apostles. It is the so-called "deaconship" of the early Church.

The history of its development is of the greatest importance and consequence. After the Ascension of Christ the Apostles evidently considered it their apostolic duty not only to preach the religious truth of the Gospel, but also to follow the example of their Master in His beneficence for humanity and dedicate their energy to social work. This explains their continuous insistence on brotherly love and works of charity. St. Paul tells of an interesting event: "James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the gentiles and they unto the circumcision: Only that we should be mindful of the poor, which same thing also I was careful to do" (Gal. 2:9,10). The lesson of this account is clear: The ministry of charity, as Christ Himself exercised it, had to be perpetuated just as well as the preaching of the Gospel. It was considered an inherent duty and integral part of the apostolate.

**The Ministry
of Charity**

In a short time the number of the faithful increased and the social obligations of charity grew to such an extent that the Apostles were no longer able to carry on the work themselves. They needed helpers. And now the Acts report a remarkable event in the early Church: "In those days, the number of disciples increasing, there arose a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, for that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve calling together the multitude of the disciples said: 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.' And the saying was liked by all the multitude, and they chose. . . .

**The Seven
Chosen
Charity
Workers**

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These they set before the Apostles, and they praying imposed hands upon them" (Acts 6:1-6).

The conclusion is obvious: The Apostles considered the social work of charity an inherent duty of the apostolate. They appointed the seven to be their assistants in order to care for this integral part of the apostolic mission. Since that time the office of the seven became a permanent institution and was established in all Christian communities.

Benigni has rightly pointed out that from this the conclusion is to be drawn that the work of charity is inseparably connected with the clerical dignity and is a duty inherent in it. "Christianity created the social mission of the Clergy."¹⁷

The memory of this conviction of the early Church is preserved in the Roman Missal to this day. In a Lesson of the Saturday in the Ember week of Lent, which was in ancient times the day of ordination for the clergy,¹⁸ we read the charity text of 1 Thessalonians 5:14 ff., as if it were an admonition for the newly ordained: "We beseech you, brethren, rebuke the unquiet, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men"—the admonition of charity!

The same admonition is contained in the venerable ritual for the consecration of a bishop. The Consecrator asks the new bishop the significant question: "Will you, for the Lord's sake, be affable and merciful to the poor and to pilgrims and to all those in need?" And again he prays over him: "Let him be the faithful and prudent servant whom Thou dost set, O Lord, over Thy household, so that he may give them food in due season, and prove himself a perfect man."

It is only a sequence of this truth if the Canon Law of the Catholic Church today includes among the duties of a pastor to his flock that he should "embrace the poor and miserable in paternal charity."¹⁹

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN WOMAN APOSTOLATE. We know from the Gospels that a number of faithful women belonged to the devoted followers of Christ and lent Him all the assistance

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they could offer. In the apostolic age womanhood is again represented as "laboring" with the Apostles for the needs of the Church, chiefly by charitative endeavor. We hear that the first Christians had the opportunity of gathering in "the house of Mary," the mother of Mark (Acts 12:12). In the Epistle to the Philippians St. Paul asks for help for "those women who have labored with me in the Gospel" (Phil. 4:3). In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle bestows great praise on Aquila and Prisca, "who have for my life laid down their own necks, to whom not I only give thanks, but also all the churches of the gentiles" (Rom. 16:4).

**Women
Helpers**

But it is most noteworthy that St. Paul refers several times clearly to women as being *officially* in the service of charity in the primitive Church. In the concluding chapter of the Epistle to Romans he recommends to the readers of his message Phebe, the "deaconess" of Cenchræ, the bearer of his letter, with the words: "I commend to you Phebe, our sister, who is in the ministry of the church that is in Cenchræ, that you receive her in the Lord as becometh saints; and that you assist her in whatsoever business she shall have need of you. For she also hath assisted many, and myself also" (Rom. 16:1-2). In his first Epistle to Timothy he indicates that especially widows with proper qualities were to be selected for such official social services. He warns the bishop of Ephesus: "Let a widow be chosen of no less than threescore years of age, who hath been the wife of one husband (married once), having testimony for her good works, if she have brought up children, if she have received to harbor, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have ministered to them that suffer tribulation, if she have diligently followed every good work" (1 Tim. 5:9,10). Whatever this position of woman may have been, it was one of social service, of charitable work, in the name of the Church, and hence we are justified in this tribute of praise: Christianity has created the social mission of women.

CHAPTER V

APOSTOLIC TEACHING ON SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

1. THE FAMILY IN THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING

The apostolic age realized fully the inestimable value of the family as the first and most important social institution and has handed down to us a great number of axioms and instructions, embracing the whole realm of family life in its widest sense: matrimony and its complicated problems, duties of husbands and wives, duties of parents and children, dignity of womanhood, obligations of masters, servants, and slaves.

St. Paul
on Marriage

A. MATRIMONY. The attitude of St. Paul toward matrimony has often, especially in recent times, been completely misunderstood. Some have declared him an outspoken enemy of matrimonial relations.¹ The reason for this misinterpretation was the one-sided emphasis on incidental passages of the first Epistle to the Corinthians which, taken out of their context and separated from their historical background, seem to favor the theory of St. Paul's opposition to marriage. The texts, as they stand, are according to all appearance very clear: "I say to the unmarried and to the widows: it is good for them if they so continue, even as I" (1 Cor. 7:8); "Art thou bound to a wife, seek not to be loosed; art thou loosed from a wife, seek not a wife" (1 Cor. 7:27); of the still unmarried woman he says: "More blessed shall she be if she remain so, according to my counsel" (1 Cor. 7:40); "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well; and he that giveth her not doth better" (1 Cor. 7:38). But the context reveals

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that St. Paul wrote under very peculiar circumstances. The Corinthians had asked him for directions in the midst of the sexual excesses that surrounded them. Therefore the Apostle lays special stress on the benefit of freedom from any sexual contact. Besides, like Christ Himself, he rated the unmarried state higher for religious reasons, as he says very plainly: "I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. 7:32-34). This is nothing but a simple application of the fundamental idea of Christ that the spiritual world is superior to the material. "He that can take, let him take it" (Matt. 19:12).

On the other hand, St. Paul *by no means minimizes* the importance of matrimony, much less does he consider it evil. He says expressly: "For fear of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:2); "If they do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to be burnt" (1 Cor. 7:9); "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well" (1 Cor. 7:38). "If thou take a wife, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned" (1 Cor. 7:28); he even recommends marriage in his Epistle to Timothy: "I will therefore that the younger [widows] should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil" (1 Tim. 5:14). But the insistence upon "his own wife" and "her own husband" demands, as the law of Christ does, strict *monogamy*.

Besides, he raises the status of the wife far above that accorded her by contemporary views to that of full equality with her husband in the essential fact of their mutual pos-

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session of each other: "Let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife in like manner to the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband. And in like manner the husband also hath not power of his own body, but the wife" (1 Cor. 7:3,4).

DIVORCE. Divorce is condemned by Paul's teaching as it is by that of Christ: "To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife" (1 Cor. 7:10,11). "Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed" (1 Cor. 7:27).

The Pauline Privilege

But the Apostle adds a clause which he says is not from the Lord. It is called the "Pauline privilege": "For the rest I speak, not the Lord. If any brother have a wife that believeth not, and she consent to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman have a husband that believeth not, and he consent to dwell with her, let her not put away her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband; otherwise your children would be unclean; but now they are holy. But if the unbeliever depart; let him depart. For a brother or sister is not under servitude in such cases. But God hath called us in peace" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).

Remarriage for widows is permitted by the apostolic teaching: "If they [the widows] do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to be burnt" (1 Cor. 7:9): "I will therefore that the younger [widows] should marry" (1 Tim. 5:14).

Wives and Husbands

BEHAVIOR OF WIVES AND HUSBANDS. St. Peter lays down lofty rules of great social significance: "Let wives be subject to their husbands, that, if any believe not the word, they may be won without the word, by the conversation of the wives, considering your chaste conversation with fear; whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair; or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel, but the hidden

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man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. . . . Ye husbands, likewise dwelling with them according to knowledge, giving honor to the female as to the weaker vessel, and as to the co-heirs of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:1-7). St. Paul proclaims the same code of matrimonial behavior in a few words: "Wives, be subject to your husbands as it behoveth in the Lord; husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter toward them" (Col. 3:18,19). He reminds us of the words of St. Peter when he writes to Timothy: "I will . . . in like manner women also in decent apparel, adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety not with plaited hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly attire, but as it becometh women professing godliness, with good works" (1 Tim. 2:8-10). As "old fashioned" as these words may sound to modern ears they contain principles valid for all times and of never-ending social significance.

DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN. St. Paul considers the duty of obedience on the part of children self-evident: "Children, obey your parents, in all things; for this is well pleasing to the Lord" (Col. 3:20). Therefore he does not dwell much on this fundamental natural and religious law. He is well aware that a violation of this precept is usually due to a wrong method of education by parents and therefore insists especially on the duties of the fathers: "Fathers, provoke not your children to indignation, lest they be discouraged" (Col. 3:21); "You, Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). He is a good father "that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all chastity" (1 Tim. 3:4). "Upon parents he laid the chief responsibility for the moral and religious education of their children. At the same time he enjoined them to use that superlative tact which is required if this most important of parental duties is to be successfully performed."²

Children
and Parents

ST. PAUL'S HYMN OF PRAISE ON MATRIMONY. The greatest praise that can be bestowed on matrimony is found in St.

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Fidelity and Love

Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord. Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. He is the savior of his body. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and delivered Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. Because we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular love his wife as himself, and let the wife fear her husband" (Eph. 5:22-33). To this may be added those other words of St. Paul: "This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel [wife] in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, like the gentiles that know not God" (1 Thess. 5:3).

Christian matrimony, according to this magnificent ideal of St. Paul, may be described as an institution which is segregated from the profane, elevated to the supernatural and, therefore, quite different from any other marriage. It is supermundane, objectively and subjectively holy, inspiring awe, and commanding reverence, lavished with heavenly blessings, because it is the reiteration and recapitulation of the divine life of the union of Christ with the Church and, therefore — the "great mystery."³

If men would enter into Christian marriage and live in

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married life in accordance with this ideal of St. Paul, the world would experience a fundamental regeneration of family life which would have a profound reaction upon the surrounding neopagan society.

B. MASTERS AND SERVANTS (SLAVES). Christ had no intention of precipitating an external social revolution. He came to create new men by transforming souls. Therefore He recognized the existing institution of slavery but imbued the mutual relation between the master and servants with a new spirit. The teaching of the apostolic age is a continuation of the ideas of Christ. The basic principle of this teaching is again the equality of all members of the "body of Christ."

Therefore the *masters* receive their lesson that they should remember that servant and master are equal in the eyes of God who is the Lord of both. They should forbear "threatenings, knowing that the Lord both of them and you is in heaven; and there is no respect for persons with Him" (Eph. 6:9). Similarly the Apostle writes to the Colossians: "Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a master in heaven" (Col. 4:1). The Apostle does not speak of rights which masters have in regard to servants, but of duties.

Duties
of Masters

Neither does he hold out rights for the *servants* but only duties: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of your heart, as to Christ. Not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with a good will serving, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (Eph. 6:5-8). We read exactly the same message in the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. 3:22-24). According to St. Peter even abuse from unpleasant masters must be accepted patiently: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy,

Duties
of Slaves

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if for conscience toward God, a man endure sorrows, suffering wrongfully" (1 Pet. 2:18,19). St. Paul makes an interesting distinction between the duties of a servant to a gentile master and those to a Christian master: "Whosoever are servants under the yoke, let them count their masters worthy of all honor, lest the name of the Lord and his doctrine be blasphemed. But they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but serve them the rather, because they are faithful and beloved, who are partakers of the benefit" (1 Tim. 6:1,2).

All One
in Christ

The problem of slavery, as being in clear contrast to the Gospel of liberty, equality, and brotherhood — as these terms are rightly understood in the New Testament — and to the dignity of Christian personality must have touched St. Paul's heart deeply. He emphasizes repeatedly that at least the spiritual slavery is abolished, that there is "neither Jew nor Greek . . . neither bond nor free," but that all are "one in Christ Jesus." But as little as Christ could St. Paul have had the intention to cause an external revolution by preaching the abolishment of this social institution, especially in the pagan world of his time. Therefore he admonishes the slaves to be content with their social lot as long as they had the sublime consolation that all Christians, masters or servants, are spiritually "brothers" and all without exception "slaves" of God or "bondmen" of Christ: "Let every man abide in the same calling in which he was called. Wast thou called being a bondman? Care not for it; but, if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a bondman, is the freeman of the Lord. Likewise He that is called, being free, is the bondman of Christ. You are bought with a price, be not made the bondslaves of men" (1 Cor. 7:20-23). The essence of slavery is destroyed by the liberation of the spirit through the Redemption of Christ.

Onesimus

This ideal example of "slavery" in the atmosphere of Christian "brotherhood" is described by St. Paul's own hand in his Epistle to Philemon. The Apostle sends the runaway slave, Onesimus, back to his master with the following mem-

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orable note: "I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who hath been heretofore unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable both to me and thee, whom I have sent back to thee. And do thou receive him as my own bowels; whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered to me in the bonds of the Gospel, but without thy counsel I would do nothing; that thy good deed might not be as it were of necessity, but voluntary. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season from thee, that thou mightest receive him again forever; not now as a servant, but instead of a servant a most dear brother, especially to me; how much more to thee both in the flesh and in the Lord. If therefore thou count me a partner, receive him as myself. And if he hath wronged thee in anything or is in thy debt, put that to my account. I Paul have written it with my own hand" (Phil. 10-19).

Slavery, as here depicted by St. Paul, has lost its sting and bitterness under the benign influence of brotherly love. Indeed slavery was definitely abolished in its essence when the man without dignity and rights — as the slave of the ancient world was — had been declared a brother, equal to any other Christian, even to his own master. The example found in the Epistle to Philemon is worthy of imitation in our modern "civilized" age of wage slavery. "Here is indeed a solution of the age-long contest between labor and capital that is both equitable and practicable. It inspires both employer and employee to struggle not for their individual rights, but for the faithful discharge of their respective responsibilities. When each does this, the rights of each will inevitably be conserved."⁴

2. PROPERTY AND WEALTH IN THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING

The problem of riches and poverty, or rather of the rich and the poor, and their relation to the truth of the Gospel, was as vital in the apostolic age as it was in the time of Christ. Therefore in the early Church we constantly hear the mighty reverberation of the words of the divine Master.

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The Poor in the Early Church

A. **THE POOR.** Christ Himself had declared as the crowning proof for the actual arrival of the Kingdom of God that "the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5). In the time of the apostolic Church the forces of the new Kingdom are in full operation. We observe the wonderful spectacle that the message of Christ to the poor and for the poor already bore glorious fruits. The report of the Acts that the faithful of the first community were "but one heart and one soul," and that there was no one "needy among them," because "all things were common unto them" (Acts 4:32-34), is only a magnificent proof that the words of the Lord had already found a perfect translation into action. The life of the earliest Christians and their attitude toward one another shows splendidly how willingly many embraced even the counsel of Christ to the young man: "If thou wilt be perfect go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor" (Matt. 19:21). St. Paul's efforts to gather collections for the poor in Jerusalem is but another version of the same wholehearted practical brotherly love. St. James, animated by this spirit of love and sympathy for the poor, reprimands those who cater to the rich and neglect the poor: "Do you not judge within yourselves, and are become judges of unjust thoughts? Hearken, my dearest brethren; hath not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him" (James 2:4,5). For the Apostolic Church the poor are also the first princes of the Kingdom of God.

The Apostolic Age and the Rich

B. **THE RICH.** Also the "*woe*" of Christ to the rich resounds with equal severity in the apostolic age. St. James writes a bitter condemnation: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down

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your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have feasted upon earth, and in riotousness you have nourished your hearts, in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and put to death the Just One, and He resisted you not" (James 5:1-6); "Do not the rich oppress you by might, and do not they draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme the good name that is invoked upon you?" (James 2:6,7.)

It is self-evident that this excoriation is meant for a certain type of the rich which only too evidently still exists in modern society. Yet, it would be entirely *wrong to conclude* from these unusually hard words against the rich that the apostolic age *condemned* property and wealth as evil in themselves. Our documents show clearly that the early community harbored, besides the great number of poor people, also well-to-do citizens of the Kingdom. We read in the Acts that Mary, the mother of Mark, possessed a house in Jerusalem and there is no reason to assume that she sold it for the benefit of the poor (Acts 12:12). Erastus, the "treasurer of the City" of Corinth, who was a member of the Christian community and friend of St. Paul, worthy to be mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, was hardly a poor man (Rom. 16:23). We read again and again that the Apostle was anxious to receive contributions for the poor of Jerusalem: "It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a contribution for the poor of the saints in Jerusalem." The Apostle finds it quite appropriate that they do so: "For, if the gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they ought also in carnal things to minister to them" (Rom. 15:26-27). He gives directions for such collections: "On the first day of the week let every one of you put apart with himself, laying up what it shall well please him, that when I come the collections be not then to be made" (1 Cor. 16:2). Everyone should give wholeheartedly: "Everyone as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness or of necessity: For God loveth a

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cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). There were some in the community who could afford "the wearing of gold or the putting on of apparel" (1 Pet. 3:3). Although St. Peter does not approve of the wrong use of riches, the general conclusion from all these texts must be that there were people with possessions in the Christian community who therefore had the means to give alms to the poor, and that the possession of wealth and property itself did not meet with disapproval of the Apostles, but was under certain conditions rather considered a blessing, as St. Paul states expressly: "God is able to make all grace abound in you, that ye always having all sufficiency may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

The Apostles, as well as Christ, make a clear distinction between riches and the rich (since this distinction often existed in practical life) or between property and the use of property. Whereas they at times even recognize a blessing in the possession of property and encourage its proper use, especially in the interest of the poor, they bitterly condemn the abuse of it.

The Dangers of Riches

In spite of this approval of property in itself, especially when rightly used, there is in the writings of the Apostles an undeniable *antipathy* toward riches, which is just as strong as that in the teaching of Christ. The reason for this attitude is the grave danger for the faithful arising from wealth. St. Paul writes to the bishop of Ephesus: "They that will become rich fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils; which some coveting have erred from the faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, fly these things and pursue justice, godliness, faith, charity, patience, mildness" (1 Tim. 6:9-11). Wealth is often the source of pride. Therefore the Apostle adds: "Charge the rich of this world not to be highminded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches but in the living God" (1 Tim. 6:17). St. John reprimands the bishop of Laodicea

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who under the influence of riches became "lukewarm": "Thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Apoc. 3:17). The anti-Christian spirit of covetousness is mostly the source and steady companion of riches, while riches themselves lead too often to all kinds of sins against God and society. For these reasons the Apostles consider wealth a danger to the followers of the Gospel.

The right attitude toward riches. This must be determined by their proper evaluation. They are only earthly perishable goods which should not be overestimated. "Let the brother of low condition glory in his exaltation; and the rich, in his being low; because as the flower of the grass shall he pass away. For the sun rose with a burning heat and parched the grass and the flower thereof fell off, and the beauty of the shape thereof perished. So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways" (James 1:9-11).

The full realization of this fundamental truth forces upon us the conclusion that the Christian must avoid covetousness and greed as well as undue care for earthly goods. The words of the Apostles to this effect often sound like the sayings of the Master: "Be nothing solicitous, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6); "Let your manners be without covetousness, contented with such things as you have" (Heb. 13:5). "I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator or covetous . . ." (1 Cor. 5:11); The rich should not "trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God" (1 Tim. 6:17). When St. John warns not to love the "world" he includes also riches: "Love not the world nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him . . . and the world passeth away and the concupiscence thereof" (1 John 2:15-17).

**Christian
Attitude
Toward
Riches**

To these negative precepts the Apostles add their positive

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orders. First of all to be content with what one possesses: "For we brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out. But having food and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content" (1 Tim. 6:7,8). St. Paul recommends his own attitude as an example to be followed by the faithful: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content therewith. I know both how to be brought low, and I know how to abound . . . both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need" (Phil. 4:11,12). Like Christ, the Apostle teaches childlike confidence in God who will provide the necessary things of life: "He that ministereth seed to the sower, will both give you bread to eat, and will multiply your seed" (2 Cor. 9:10). But the supreme apostolic law for the rich is to use their wealth in the service of practical charity toward others: "Charge the rich . . . to do good, to be rich in good works, to give easily, to communicate to others; to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life" (1 Tim. 6:17-19). For St. John, love of God and practical works of charity are inseparable: "He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him; how doth the charity of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:17,18).

Christ's and the Apostles' teaching of love "in deed and in truth" will prove the most dynamic force effecting the formation of a happy society of men.

3. LABOR AND WAGES IN THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING

The fact that the Apostles constantly designate themselves as servants of Christ — "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle" (Rom. 1:1; cf. also Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:1); "Simon Peter, servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:1); "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:1) — indicates that they not only consider themselves laborers for Christ, but also true representatives and messengers of His teaching.

Apostolic Teaching on Social Conditions

A. ST. PAUL, THE MODEL OF LABOR. AS Christ blessed the laboring classes by being Himself a laborer, so does St. Paul. He insists with unusual emphasis on his ability and ever-readiness to work for his livelihood with his own hands in order to be free and without obligation to anybody.

In his farewell speech at Miletus to the clergy of Ephesus he makes the bold statement: "I have not coveted any man's silver, gold, or apparel, as you yourselves know; for such things as were needful for me and them that are with me, these hands have furnished. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak and to remember the word of the Lord Jesus, how He said: 'It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive'" (Acts 20:33-35). To the Thessalonians he writes: "You remember, brethren, our labor and toil, working night and day, lest we should be chargeable to any of you, we preached among you the Gospel of God" (1 Thess. 2:9). And again: "We were not disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing, but in labor and in toil we worked night and day, lest we should be chargeable to any of you. Not as if we had not power, but that we might give ourselves a pattern unto you, to imitate us" (2 Thess. 3:7-9). He can announce to the Corinthians: "We labor, working with our own hands" (1 Cor. 4:12); "When I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man . . . and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you and so I will keep myself" (2 Cor. 11:9). The Acts report that Paul came to Corinth where he met Aquila, the tentmaker, and his wife Priscilla: "And because he was of the same trade, he remained with them and wrought" (Acts 18:3).

St. Paul the
Workingman

St. Paul is not only the most valiant preacher of Christ's Gospel among the Apostles but a real Apostle of manual labor, the glorious foreman of all laborers for all times. He speaks to laborers as one of their own and as one who better than anyone in the Christian era realized the value of labor in the light of the Gospel of Christ. By his own example he not

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only blessed and exalted labor, but taught at the same time the great social lesson not to flee from the world and its obligations but to face it courageously and to master it. If the ancient pagan world considered labor something despicable, St. Paul raised it in the name of Christ to a place of honor. This New Testament consecration of labor should not be forgotten, either by the workingman himself or by those who use or employ his energies and faculties. They are sacred.

B. LABOR, A DUTY. It lies in the nature of Christ's Gospel that man should have his share in earthly goods for a decent sustenance. The principal way of obtaining this share is labor. St. Paul has laid down various canons in respect to the duty of labor.

It is above all a duty of *justice*. The Apostle proclaims in his "classical passage on the duty of labor":⁵ "This we declared to you: that if any man will not work neither let him eat. For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all" (2 Thess. 3:10,11). The Holy Father has interpreted this passage himself in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*: "The Apostle is here passing judgment on those who refuse to work though they could and ought to do so; he admonishes us to use diligently our time and our powers of body and mind, and not to become burdensome to others as long as we are able to provide for ourselves." But in opposition to certain false prophets of modern times he adds: "In no sense does he teach that labor is the only title which gives a right to a living or to profits." St. Paul declares the broad general principle that man is bound in justice to work for his livelihood as long as he is able to do so and not to eat up the fruit of the work of others in idleness. The Apostle speaks of the idler as if he were a fundamental criminal. He wants him to be ostracized by the whole community: "We charge you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly [i.e., not willing to work] and not according to the tradition which they have

St. Paul's
Doctrine on
Labor

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received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6). The "tradition" is the example of his own labor to which he refers immediately. It is interesting to note that St. Paul describes the man who is unwilling to work as "walking disorderly" in the sense that he is breaking up the necessary existing order in this world. It is quite obvious that judged by the light of this first labor canon some modern conditions are in need of profound reformation. Of course St. Paul does not mean to deny the right of a living to those who are unable to work.

Labor is further a duty postulated in the name of *human dignity*. Work is a way to freedom and independence, the precious accessories of human personality. St. Paul's example is again before us: He repeats several times that he worked with his own hands "night and day" in order not to "eat any man's bread for nothing" (2 Thess. 3:8). Therefore he can teach the faithful with power: "We entreat you . . . that you do your own business and work with your own hands, as we commanded you, and that you walk honestly toward them that are without, and that you want nothing of any man's," i.e., without work (1 Thess. 4:10,11).

Labor is furthermore even a duty of *charity* which is a general law binding all Christians. Therefore St. Paul exhorts his hearers to work so that they will be able to assist those in need. He refers again to his own example: "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak" (Acts 20:35). And the Ephesians are instructed: "He that stole, let him now steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need" (Eph. 4:28). Hence labor with a charitable purpose is a way to atone for past sins of injustice.

There is a narrative in the Acts which contains a beautiful illustration of God's blessing bestowed on manual labor for the purpose of charity: "In Joppe there was a certain disciple named Tabitha (Dorcas). . . . This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." She died, and St. Peter

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was called from the neighboring town of Lydda. When he came "all the widows stood about him weeping, and showing him the coats and garments which Dorcas made them." By a striking miracle St. Peter raised her to life (Acts 9:36-40), "to show to Christian posterity the value of labor morally and religiously sanctified."⁶ Weber points to the striking contrast between the story of Tabitha and that of Ananias and Saphira, and to the lesson contained in both: labor for charity's sake leads to life, covetousness to death. "What a glorious symbolism in these events for Christianity in its task of renovating the world."⁷

After all, labor is to be performed as a *service to God*. St. Paul makes this very clear when he exhorts the servants to do their work "from the heart as to the Lord, and not to men" (Col. 3:23); or to serve "as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God" (Eph. 6:6). Labor thus becomes divine service; therefore it is to be performed with confidence in God, on whom everything depends. Man's work without God is vanity. "Behold, now you that say today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and there we will spend a year, and will traffic and make our gain. Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow" (James 4:13,14). But labor with God will receive a divine reward: "God is not unjust that He should forget your work and the love which you have shown in His name, you who have ministered and do minister to the saints" (Heb. 6:10).

C. RIGHT TO JUST WAGES. The duty of man to work for his living and the right to sustenance are the two poles of the labor question in the apostolic age. As sharp as St. Paul's language is in his declaration of the laborer's duty so determined is his insistence on the workingman's rights. "Are not you my work in the Lord?" he asks the Corinthians, and continues:

"Have not we power to eat and to drink? . . . Who serveth as a soldier at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth

"As to
the Lord"

The Worker's
Right

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the flock and eateth not the milk of the flock? Speak I these things according to man? Or doth not the law also say these things? For it is written in the Law of Moses: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or doth He say this indeed for our sakes? For these things are written for our sakes; that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and he that thrasheth, in hope to receive fruit. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter, if we reap your carnal things? . . . Know you not that they who work in the holy place eat the things that are of the holy place; and they that serve the altar partake with the altar? So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:1-14).

The right of a man to his living, even if he is working for the glory of the Gospel, could hardly find a more pronounced expression. Is the word of the Apostle sufficiently heeded among Christians?

On another occasion he insists that wages are not a gift, but a duty of justice: "Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned according to grace, but according to debt" (Rom. 4:4). To Timothy he quotes the word of Christ Himself: "The laborer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim. 5:18); and in another word he assures him of the same truth: "The husbandman that laboreth, must first partake of the fruits" (2 Tim. 2:6). In full harmony with the Gospel the Apostle declares that in God's service there are many forms of labor, and each worker shall be rewarded in accordance with his labor: "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (1 Cor. 3:8). St. James, the bishop of Jerusalem, should be claimed by all wage earners as their special patron. No New Testament writer, not even the high-spirited St. Paul, has condemned exploitation of the laborer with more relentless scourge of speech and protected the rights of the workingman with greater fervor, than he. It is due to his vigorous declaration that the abominable crime of withholding

**The Crime
That Cries
to Heaven**

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just wages is called through the entire Christian tradition a sin that "cries to heaven." Referring to the rich exploiter he exclaims: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you. . . . Behold the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth" (James 5:1-4).

The apostolic age, inspired by the principles of the great, Divine Laborer of Nazareth, with its frank and forceful declaration of the inalienable rights and indispensable duties of the workingman, has solved the labor question in principle long ago. It now rests with mankind, especially with Christians, to put its everlasting axioms into practice and thus find the way to their salvation.

4. STATE AND AUTHORITY IN THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING

The fundamental principles of Christ are also in this question faithfully carried out by the Apostles. Although there is a difference between Christ's bold and frank condemnation of the hopelessly failing Jewish authority and St. Paul's reserved attitude toward the pagan authority of the Roman Empire, the underlying principle of the Apostle's teaching is identical with that of Christ.

**All Power
from Above**

A. AUTHORITY FROM GOD. The declaration of St. Paul in his classical passage on authority in the Epistle to the Romans is based on the simple word of Christ to Pilate that "power" is "from above" (John 19:11). The Apostle is more extensive, adding at the same time the obligation emanating from the statement of Christ: "Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for there is no power but from God and those that are, are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). This is in essence the same sanction of authority, civil or political, which is contained in the words of the Master.

But St. Paul is not unaware of the duties of authority. He does not attack any superior power of the Roman Empire, although he could expect difficulties from it, but speaks

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in terms which would rather indicate what every authority *ought to be*. If he says: "Princes are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Wilt thou then be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear; for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister; an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil" (Rom. 13:3,4), his words involve the supposition that the "princes" fulfill the duties of their God-given office, and therefore consider their mission as an agency for doing "good" and banishing "evil," for offering "service" to human society. That every authority is not of this kind the Apostle had to experience in his own person. Again, when he speaks of the authority of masters over their slaves he does not fail to point out plainly the duties connected with their authority: "Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a master in heaven" (Col. 4:1; cf. Eph. 6:9). Authority is from God; but the dependence on God includes the burden of doing God's will. This is, beyond doubt, St. Paul's teaching in conformity with the word of Christ.

The Duties of Authority

B. OBEDIENCE, A DUTY. If authority is the representative of God it follows that men must show obedience to authority. "Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist purchase to themselves damnation . . . wherefore be subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." Obedience manifests itself practically by the payment of tribute to the State: "Therefore also you pay tribute. For they are the ministers of God, serving unto this purpose. Render therefore to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:2-7). It is especially interesting to note how anxious St. Paul is that everything should be avoided which might disturb the authority of the Empire; he writes to Titus: "Admonish them to be subject to princes and powers, to obey

Obedience to Authority

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at a word, to be ready to every good work" (Tit. 3:1). In his Epistle to Timothy the Apostle even prescribes prayers for all persons in authority: "I desire therefore first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made by men for kings and for all that are in high station, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (1 Tim. 2:1-3). St. Peter has entirely the same teaching: "Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake, whether it be to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of the good. . . . Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:13-17).

The law of obedience is not only obligatory in relation to "princes," "kings," and those "in high station" but in any case of subordination of one to another in social life. In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians (5:12) the Apostle demands respect for those who work among them for the sake of the Gospel: "We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that you esteem them more abundantly in charity for their work's sake." We have already heard that children are admonished to be obedient to their parents and servants to their masters.

But in all cases we could notice that in Christianity the law of obedience to authority is based on the higher motive that authority is from God, and so the representative of God, and should therefore represent God worthily. This religious note in obedience is the only permanent protection of social order and peace.

C. AUTHORITY NOT ABSOLUTE. This important by-law of the New Testament statute of obedience is briefly but forcefully expressed in the Acts on the occasion when the Apostles, in disobedience to the Jewish high priest, preached the truth of the Gospel. When reprimanded "Peter and the Apostles answering, said: 'We ought to obey God rather than men'"

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(Acts 5:29). We have here only a translation into other words of the dictum of Christ: "Render . . . to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). No authority on earth has power to command obedience in opposition to the law of God. Such was the conviction of the Apostles which they sealed with their blood.

Although the Apostles, following the teaching of Christ, never preached violent opposition against unjust authority, St. Paul in his own person *fled* from unworthy authority. "At Damascus," he tells us, "the governor of the nation under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes to apprehend me; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands" (2 Cor. 11:32,33). St. Peter, too, fled from the intrigues of King Herod (Acts 12:1 sqq.). At another time St. Paul made use of the opportunity to *defend* himself against unjust accusations before the Roman Governor Felix and King Agrippa (Acts 24 and 26). And once, insisting on the rights of his Roman [pagan] citizenship before Governor Festus, he *appealed* to the Emperor himself: "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no injury, as thou very well knowest. For if I have injured them, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die. But if there be none of these things whereof they accuse me, no man may deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar" (Acts 25:10,11). The lesson of St. Paul's example is valid at all times for all Christians in all persecutions.⁸

St. Paul
Under
Persecution

5. BEHAVIOR OF EARLY CHRISTIANS TOWARD THE PAGAN WORLD

The Christians of the apostolic age, surrounded by an immense pagan world with which they had to enter into normal social relations, were like little islands in the ocean of the Gentiles. Their attitude and behavior toward the suspicious, antagonistic, and often hateful environment conveys an important lesson to modern Christians who live, more or less,

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in similar conditions amid neopagan surroundings all over the world.

We have observed that Christ described the mission of His Apostles and followers by the significant phrases: You are "the salt of the earth," the "light of the world," the "leaven of humanity." In what manner did the apostolic age carry out its mission? What was its attitude of mind and its practical behavior, as reflected in the records of the Acts and Epistles and the teachings of the Apostles?

A. BROTHERHOOD. First of all we observe that their principle of "brotherhood" was not restricted to Christians but was extended, according to Christ's principle of universality, beyond their own boundaries to all men. When St. Paul writes to the Galatians: "Whilst we have time, let us work good to *all men*, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:10), he states expressly that no man is excluded from the Christian principle of brotherly love and charity, not even enemies and persecutors. This all-embracing love is the dominant note of the entire apostolic preaching.

The highest expression of brotherly love is contained in the teaching that the Christians constitute the "body of Christ." But does the sanctifying power of the "body of Christ" limit itself only to Christians? In answering this question we may refer to a remarkable passage of St. Paul concerning the union of two persons in marriage: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband" (1 Cor. 7:14). If in the tiny social cell of the family the believing partner exercises a sanctifying power over the whole union, then, according to the spirit of Paul, it is obvious that in the great union of all men in the whole human society the faith of true Christians means, in a somewhat similar manner, a sanctification and consecration of the remaining part of humanity. The entire human society is in this sense objectively sanctified by the spirit of Christ living in the Christian part of humanity.

Sanctifying
Human
Society

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The resulting duty for true Christians is: to be faithful ministers of the sanctification of human society by their own example in word and deed.

B. EXAMPLE IN WORD AND DEED. The example of the apostolic age in the midst of a hostile world is indeed, as we cannot fail to have noted throughout this inquiry, the realization of the ideal of true Christianity as taught by the Master. St. Peter gave his readers this rule of life: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pet. 2:11,12). The faithful of the earliest communities lived up to this apostolic exhortation as Christians in word and deed. They were truly what Christ wanted them to be:

Light of
the World

The "*leaven*" of humanity, the "*salt of the earth*," the "*light of the world*."

CONCLUSION

SOCIAL CRISIS AND CATHOLIC ACTION

The Hercules of modern society has arrived at the parting of the ways. He has to decide whether he is to proceed on his old road to destruction, or on a new road to recovery. Our civilization "is faced with the choice between a return to the spiritual traditions of Christianity or the renunciation of them in favor of complete materialism."¹ We are witnesses of a momentous crisis in history. Rauschenbusch correctly says: "Whenever men hereafter write the story of how Christendom became Christian they will have to begin a new chapter at the years in which we are living."² In the midst of political and economic revolutions and catastrophes, of religious and moral struggles and debates, humanity realizes that a new period of history is at hand either for better or for worse.

Whereas writers like O. Spengler, in his *Untergang des Abendlandes*, have depicted civilization in darkest colors and behold the world reeling in despair amid the pangs of pessimism, there are others who, inspired by the unfailing promise of Christ that the "gates of hell shall not prevail" against His Church, confidently believe they can see the light of a better day on distant shores. The Vicar of Christ himself is leading the crusade of Christian optimism by his social encyclicals, which like trumpets of hope call to victory from the heights of Eternity. Catholic and even non-Catholic authors are encouraged by the voice of the Supreme Pontiffs, and dare to profess their unshaken confidence that the present world is not indeed "in the throes of its last agony," but rather is in labor, like a mother, ready "to bring forth things greater

Social Crisis and Catholic Action

and more beautiful.”³ In asking for faith in what the Holy See calls a Reconstruction of the Social Order, we are asking for what is eminently possible in the light of the Gospel teaching.

The fundamental reason for our Christian optimism is the unshaken conviction that the same forces which once revolutionized the world in the beginning of our era are still existing. Throughout this inquiry we have noted their original strength and vitality. It is a challenge to humanity, and to Christians, in particular, to permit them to become effective. Christianity at its very beginning fulfilled its great mission by absorbing the good and healthy elements of a glorious civilization, firing them with new energy, adding to them its own divine forces, and thus creating the new and more glorious civilization of the Christian era. Christianity has still at its command the same original transforming power, and it may therefore accomplish another miracle by conducting the highly charged currents of our present culture in a direction salutary to society, and so creating a new phase of Christian civilization. The world does not need a new religion to care for its present exigencies but a “new application of religion to life.”⁴

At a time somewhat similar to ours the “mystery” religions of the ancient world attempted to lead people out of chaos into happiness. But, as Dawson says, they were powerless to bridge the gulf between human life and spiritual reality. “They were ways to escape life, not ways of regeneration. Christianity defeated its rivals because it was felt to be an historical and social reality, capable of transforming human life.”⁵ Christianity, with the same role today, has the inherent energy necessary for success. The words of Cardinal Newman are very apt: “The Church that made Europe may yet save Europe.”⁶ This thought is a veritable Gospel of “good tidings” not only for Europe, but for the world at large.

What makes the transformation of society difficult is the fact that it is not a mechanism but a living organism. Were it, as materialists claimed, a mere machine, it would be sufficient to replace its weak, defective, worn-out elements. Mate-

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rial adjustments, by arranging satisfactory working hours, just wages, right distribution of property, etc., might make the mechanism operate again. But society is composed of men with souls. It is the *makrokosmos*, the "big world," consisting of millions of *mikrokosmoi*, "small worlds," where the problems of each individual man are multiplied in the multitude of society. His chief personal problem is the continual conflict between "spirit" and "flesh" (as St. Paul puts it), i.e., between the principle of a higher life and the principle of corruption. The same holds true of the large world of human society. Never can it be satisfied by the mere enjoyment of food and money. It needs the victory of the spirit that it may live in harmony and happiness, which is possible only when the spiritual reigns supreme. Law enforcement can never replace spiritual renovation.

This means that for society, as well as for the individual members of society, religious and material interests are often inseparable and must find a *modus vivendi*, a way of dwelling together in harmony. The social and religious interests are even joined together in the social declarations of Christ. What God has joined, no man should try to put asunder. A member of society cannot divide himself, reserving the spiritual and religious element for the sanctuary of his home, and taking with him into society the material element only. The religious man has to be social, and the social man has to be religious. "If religion is not a manifestation of life, then it is nothing; and if it is a manifestation of life, then it must stand somehow in an organic relation to the rest of life."⁷ The entire life must be a reflection of the religious spirit; and a Christian member should distinguish himself from non-Christian members of society. Catholics represented as boasting that: "Apart from twenty minutes a week (for Mass) we are just like other folk,"⁸ do not reflect the spirit of true Christianity.

The Christian transformation of present society cannot be accomplished without heroism on the part of individual members. Although Rauschenbusch, like Burke, makes the absurd

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statement that a system based on heroic virtues "is doomed to failure and even corruption,"⁹ it remains a fact that Christianity owes its existence to the heroism of Christ and its growth to the heroism of His followers. The history of Christianity shows that whenever the original ideal was darkened by the spirit of secularization it had always to be restored by heroic efforts. Monasticism illustrates that the heroic realization of the ideal of Christianity enables even a smaller group of men to shape civilizations and transform society. The victory of Christianity in the fourth century was not a natural religious evolution. "It was, on the contrary, a violent interruption of that process which forced European civilization out of its old orbit into a path which it would never have followed by its own momentum."¹⁰ The phenomenal deed was accomplished by the Christian heroism of the preceding centuries.

And today, with Christianity harboring so many spiritually bloodless Christians, the restoration to new life can be brought about only by a spiritual blood transfusion from those who, by their religious heroism, kept the Christian ideals in their fullest vitality. Therefore Maritain exclaims hopefully: "Christian heroism will one day become the sole solution for the problem of life. . . . We shall doubtless see coincident with the worst conditions in human history a flowering of sanctity."¹¹ And he adds on another occasion: "The world is crying out for saints. If Catholics do not give it what it wants, so much the worse for them and for everybody, it will be revenged upon them and go for consolation to the devil."¹²

In the great process of the transformation of society according to Christian principles, the Catholic Church and her members have the God-willed leadership. For that reason the Holy Father solemnly proclaimed it as his right and duty to raise his voice in the crisis and give authoritative directions to suffering humanity all over the world: "It is our right and our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems" (*Quadragesimo Anno*). He therefore summons "all men of good will," first of all Catholics, to join him in the

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crusade for the welfare of mankind. "Let, then, all men of good will stand united. Let all those who, under the pastors of the Church, wish to fight this good and peaceful fight of Christ, as far as talents, powers and station allow, strive to play their part in the Christian renewal of human society" (*Ibid.*). It is a dangerous fallacy entertained by some superficial minds to declare this assistance of the Church and her "pastors" superfluous because society, on its own initiative, has developed institutions for social welfare. We are told in all seriousness that "the vast majority of personal readjustments that are being continually made today are without benefit of clergy"; we are assured that social welfare agencies, public clinics, etc., "replace the work of organized religion"; that "great changes in the expression of religion may be required in the next generation or so."¹³ But it is entirely overlooked that the social institutions which society creates without the direct assistance of the Church are, after all, inspired by the spirit of Christian tradition which often operates unconsciously even in those who, externally, have severed their relation with any Christian denomination. It does not prove that the Church is superfluous but, on the contrary, makes us realize what an essential change could be brought about for the benefit of mankind, if all Christians would apply the principles of Christ in their practical life in the midst of society.

If we observe the truly astonishing efforts of non-Catholic writers to search the teaching of the New Testament for social guidance and direction; if we read their arbitrary, often distorted and misleading, though perhaps well-meant treatises on the significance of Christ's social teaching and its value for the present time; if we realize, on the other hand, how little is done in the Catholic literature of our country to bring out the social principles of Christ and the Apostles for the information of our people; if we realize that the greatest and most sublime society-making factor is hardly referred to in our Catholic social literature, i.e., the Redemption of Jesus which

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makes Christian members of human society a "new Creation" of supernatural character, and their totality the most sacred unit of the "body of Christ" — if we realize all this, we must admit that an immense field of work lies before us, especially before that providential Catholic institution, inaugurated by the Holy Father, which is called "Catholic Action." Catholic Action means, as a recent writer says correctly, "nothing else than the extension of the Kingdom of Christ through the activity of the lay apostolate, guided and inspired by the clergy and the Hierarchy,"¹⁴ i.e., the restoration of that genuine Christian spirit which we have described in the previous pages and which pulsated so powerfully through the members of the primitive Church, clergy and laity alike. "It implies the leading of a true Catholic life, the promotion of the Faith in whatever manner may be possible to the individual, the rendering of social service in accordance with the ideas set forth by Christ and His Church, and the performance of spiritual and corporal works of mercy. . . . It affects not only religious life, but all forms of social life — family, civic, economic, student, recreational, and so forth."¹⁵ Catholic Action presupposes, therefore, not only personal holiness and a loving acceptance of the religious and social principles of Christ, but demands of every Christian a spirit of readiness for the propagation of those principles and an actual social service, as proposed in the Gospel and the apostolic writings. It means the effective perpetuation of the life of the Saviour in this world, in word and in service. As the Holy Father declares in his Letter to Cardinal Bertram and has repeated in different words on still other occasions: "The Christian once trained, must promote outside of himself the life that he has received. He ought to carry everywhere this treasure of Christianity and make it live in every field of human relations, in family and in public life, not exclusive of politics. For what we wish is that Christ rule on earth as He rules in heaven, and that His kingdom over the world become effective."¹⁶

A mere appreciation of personal holiness and an enthusiastic

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Christian propaganda in words alone, laudable as these may be, are not sufficient to fulfill the Holy Father's wishes in his call for Catholic Action. The world needs real action. If "renunciation," as Garriguet says so frankly, is "the foundation of social order,"¹⁷ a formidable campaign for active renunciation must be the first step in the reform of our social order. The word of Pope Pius XI concerning "superfluous goods" and the "gravest obligation of charity, beneficence and liberality, which rests upon the wealthy," has to be translated into action. Gorgeous and unnecessary private palaces, gorgeous and unnecessary private households, gorgeous and unnecessary banquets, gorgeous private bank accounts and wild accumulation of private possessions in the midst of poverty-stricken millions without shelter, are just as irreconcilable with the spirit emanating from the manger of Bethlehem and the heart of Christ, who selected poverty as His life's companion, as are the greed and aspirations of the socially inferior for extravagance and high life. Renunciation in spirit and action is the visible and indispensable proof of Christianity in this crisis. Renunciation is the deepest meaning of social Christianity and social Catholicism. Such is the truth we read on every page of the history of primitive Christianity. And in one sense Christianity has to become primitive again to bring salvation to a modern world in its misery.

There remains an important point to be considered. The present society of the world, caught in the world's crisis, does not consist of Christians only. The great majority of men are not Christian. What, then, is the value and significance of Christ's Redemption and its social message for non-Christians? What is the general duty of Christians toward their non-Christian brethren? And last but not least, how do non-Christian members of human society share in the treasures of Christianity?

To these questions we answer that Christ's words are directed to all men. He desires all men to participate in the blessings of His Gospel. He commissioned His Apostles:

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"Going therefore teach you all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19,20). All are invited to come to Him, "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you" (Matt. 11:28). If Christ is the truth, the solution of the social problem in this world crisis is to be sought by Christians and non-Christians in His word of truth, which as Christians we must bring to the world.

Christians, therefore, in the human society of our day must be what the immediate disciples of Christ were commanded to be: the "leaven" of humanity, the "salt of the earth," the "light of the world." Christian example has still the same inherent and victorious power which it had in the beginning and down through the centuries.

Lastly, let us not forget the significance of that promise of the Apostle to the smallest social unit, the family: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband" (1 Cor. 7:14). As was said before, we may apply these words in a certain sense to the universal society of mankind. The unbelievers in it are blessed by the believers. All human society with its hopes and its fears is living in the sunlight of Christian blessing—it is basking in the sun of sanctification.

Thus may Catholics of today be to their own generation what the author of the Epistle to Diognetus testified that the Christians of the second century were for their own times, "the soul of the world" (Ch. vi).

Christianize the conscience of humanity, and the world's problems are solved.

APPENDIX

SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH

The sole purpose of this volume has been to offer, in organic form, a detailed description of the spiritual social forces of the New Testament. Yet it may be well to supply here, by way of Appendix, a brief summary of the practical instructions of the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. This authoritative document by Pope Pius XI will serve to indicate how the social message of the Catholic Church today remains in perfect accord with the social message of Christ and His Apostles as announced by them nineteen centuries ago. It is an official exposition of the social teaching of the Church of Christ, together with a practical application of the social doctrine of the New Testament to the problems of our time. Since all citations in this Appendix are taken from the same Encyclical specific references can be dispensed with.

The Supreme Pontiff introduces his epochmaking Encyclical by presenting in retrospect a list, as we may say, of the most significant social proclamations of Leo XIII. Viewed together, these monumental documents, issued at various periods by the Vicar of Christ, are as beacon lights to the world amid the desperate confusion of modern society. They are: The Encyclical *Arcanum*, on the Foundation of Human Society, i.e., Matrimony and Family (Feb. 10, 1880); the Encyclical *Diuturnum*, on the Origin of Civil Power (June 29, 1881); the Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, on the Co-ordination of Civil Power with the Church (Nov. 1, 1885); the Encyclical *Sapientiae Christianae*, on the Duties of Christian Citizens (Jan. 10, 1890); the Encyclical *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, on

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Socialism (Dec. 28, 1878); the Encyclical *Libertas*, on Human Liberty and its Misinterpretations (June 20, 1888); and finally the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, on the Condition of Labor (May 15, 1891).

It was this last which "laid down for all mankind unerring rules for the right solution of the difficult problems of human solidarity, called the social question, at the very time when such guidance was most opportune and necessary." As an enduring monument, *aere perennius*, of Papal wisdom and love for the flock of Christ, it was therefore taken by Pope Pius XI as a basis for his own proclamations of the *Quadragesimo Anno*, on the Reconstruction of the Social Order (May 15, 1931).

Leo XIII raised his voice in compassion for the misery of the workingman. The immense development of economic and industrial powers had a disastrous effect in dividing human society into two classes, a small group with unlimited riches and the large mass of workingmen, "oppressed by dire poverty." "The question at issue was one to which no solution could be found apart from the intervention of *religion* and of the Church. Basing His doctrine solely upon the unchangeable principle drawn from right reason and *divine revelation*, he indicated and proclaimed with confidence and as one having power the relative rights and mutual duties of the rich and of the poor, of capital and of labor, and at the same time the part that was to be taken by the Church, by the State, and by the persons immediately concerned."

Although the Encyclical was hailed by the workingman as a voice from heaven, it was "so far and so unexpectedly in advance of its time that the slow of heart ridiculed the study of the new social philosophy and the timid feared to scale its lofty heights." This was the reason the Encyclical of Pope Pius XI intended: (1) to point out the "great benefits" due to the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII; (2) "to vindicate the social and economic doctrine of so great a master against certain doubts . . . and to develop more fully some of its

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points"; (3) to "arraign modern economics and examine the nature of Socialism, to expose the root of the present social disorder, and to point out the only salutary cure, a reform of Christian morals."

1. THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE ENCYCLICAL "RERUM NOVARUM"

A. THE EFFORTS OF THE CHURCH. "The Church insists on the authority of the *Gospel*, upon those teachings whereby the conflict can be brought to an end or rendered, at least, far less bitter. The Church uses her efforts not only to enlighten the mind, but to direct by her precept the life and conduct of each and all. The Church improves the condition of the workingman by means of numerous organizations." Such was the statement of Leo XIII, reiterated by his successor. The bishops of the Catholic Church, have tried with untiring zeal to put the doctrines of his Encyclical into practice; priests and laymen have dedicated their energies to the study of social science; courses in this field were introduced into Catholic universities, academies, and seminaries; congresses, "weeks," study clubs, and publications of many kinds became active in propagating correct social principles; even non-Catholics were attracted by Catholic action. "Thus Catholic principles of sociology gradually became part of the intellectual heritage of the whole human race." They were advocated "in legislative assemblies and in courts of justice." Rules and regulations, elaborated after the war by various heads of nations for the rights of labor, agreed with the principles of Leo XIII so much "as to seem expressly deduced from them." The *practical* result of all this was an increased activity for the uplifting of the workingman, a lively zeal of the secular and regular clergy for the education of the laboring class to an understanding of their Christian dignity, an admirable display of the works of Christian charity for the suffering among the working class.

B. THE EFFORTS OF CIVIL AUTHORITY. Thus, after the

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Encyclical of Leo XIII, which insisted fearlessly on the duty of the State to protect the weak, "the leaders of the nations became at last more fully conscious of their obligations and set to work seriously to promote a broader social policy." Outstanding Catholics "were not infrequently the foremost advocates of the new policy" in legislative assemblies. Social laws in the interest of the wage earner were proposed to "the peoples' representatives by ecclesiastics."

C. THE EFFORTS OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKMEN. Following the directions of Leo XIII, the workingmen, despite the suspicion of governments, formed "unions according to their several trades," for the betterment of their condition and the upkeep of their religious ideals. Priests and laymen helped them to prepare "the way for a Christian renewal of the whole social life." Where Catholics, due to unfortunate circumstances were not able to form Catholic unions, the Pope permitted that they "enroll themselves in neutral trade unions," provided that the latter would "always respect justice and equity, and leave their Catholic members full freedom to follow the dictates of their conscience and to obey the precepts of the Church," and provided also that side by side with these trade unions should exist "other associations which aim at giving their members a thorough religious and moral training." It was hoped that such associations would react favorably on the labor unions. Accordingly Catholic associations other than labor unions were founded. Unfortunately, however, employers under the pressure of circumstances hesitated to follow the good example of labor. But here also progress has been made.

Thus the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* has "proved itself the *Magna Charta* on which all Christian activities in social matters are ultimately based." But some doubts of the past and "changed conditions of society have rendered necessary a more precise application and amplification of Leo's doctrine."

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2. VINDICATION OF THE ENCYCLICAL OF LEÓ XIII AGAINST SOME DOUBTS; NEW RECOMMENDATIONS OF PIUS XI

A. AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SPHERE. The Church maintains the principle that "it would be wrong for her to interfere without just cause in . . . earthly concerns." But she has a "God-given task" to use her authority "in all those matters that have a bearing on moral conduct." "Reason itself clearly deduces from the nature of things and from the individual and social character of man, what is the end and object of the whole economic order assigned by God the Creator." Economic questions are subject to moral law.

B. THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY. Catholic doctrine, in contrast to the teaching of Socialism, holds that man has a right to property. But this right is *individual* as well as *social* in character, i.e., "if the social and public aspect of ownership be denied or minimized, the logical consequence is individualism. . . . On the other hand, the rejection or diminution of its private and individual character necessarily leads to some form of collectivism."

C. OBLIGATIONS OF OWNERSHIP. "The right of property must be distinguished from its use. It belongs to what is called commutative justice faithfully to respect the possessions of others." The proper use of possessions "does not fall under this form of justice, but under certain other virtues." It is not true that the very misuse or even the nonuse of ownership destroys or forfeits "the right itself." The boundaries between right of ownership and its use have to be carefully determined according to the "requirements of social life."

D. POWER OF THE STATE. From the twofold character of ownership, individual and social, it follows that not only one's "own advantage but also the common good" must be considered. The right to decide in doubtful cases lies in the hands of the government, provided natural and divine law be observed. "But private ownership cannot be taken away by the State." "For man the domestic household is antecedent, as

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well in idea as in fact, to the gathering of men into a community." . . . "Crushing taxes and tributes" are unlawful. "But when the civil authority *adjusts* ownership to meet the needs of the public good, it acts not as an enemy, but as a friend of private owners."

E. OBLIGATIONS OF SUPERFLUOUS INCOME. "Man's superfluous income is not left entirely to his own direction. The gravest obligations of charity, beneficence, and liberality which rest upon the wealthy are constantly insisted upon in telling words by Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church." But the investment of superfluous income "for the opportunity of useful employment" is an "act of real liberality, particularly appropriate to the needs of our time."

F. TITLES IN ACQUIRING OWNERSHIP. "The original acquisition of property takes place by first occupation and by industry or, as it is called, specification. . . . The only form of labor, however, which gives the workingman a title to its fruits, is that which a man exercises as his own master, and by which some new form or new value is produced."

G. CAPITAL AND LABOR. States grow by the combined labor of employers and employed. But all labor would be "ineffective" if God, the Creator of all things, had not granted the "wealth and resources of nature." It follows that "Capital cannot be without labor, nor labor without capital." Hence it is "entirely false to ascribe the results of their combined efforts to either party alone and it is flagrantly unjust that either should deny the efficacy of the other and seize all the profits."

a) *Unjust Claims of Capital.* In the past capital "claimed all the products and profits and left to the laborer the barest minimum."

b) *Unjust Claims of Labor.* Equally false is the principle, "that all products and profits, excepting those required to repair and replace invested capital, belong by every right to the workingman."

c) *Principle of Just Distribution.* Private ownership is

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based on the law of nature. But the distribution of wealth and property must take place according to social justice, so that the "good of the whole community" is safeguarded. "One class is forbidden to exclude the other from a share in the profits." It is wrong to "abolish all forms of ownership and all profits not obtained by labor, whatever be their nature or significance in human society, for the sole reason that they are not acquired by toil." It is also wrong to appeal to St. Paul (2 Thess. 3:10 — "If any man will not work, neither let him eat") for the justification of this principle. "Each class, then, must receive its due share, and the distribution of created goods must be brought into conformity with the demands of the common good and social justice."

d) The Uplifting of the Proletariat. The injunction of Leo XIII in this regard has been "forgotten" or "ignored" or "deemed impracticable." The number of the dispossessed laboring masses has "increased beyond all measure." There is also an "immense army of hired rural laborers, whose condition is depressed in the extreme." "Efficacious remedies" are necessary. Earthly goods are at present "far from being rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men."

e) Property for Wage Earners. Efforts must be made, that "a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the workingmen," so that they "may be enabled to bear the family burden with greater ease and security," and also that "some little provision will remain for those whom they leave behind them." If these principles are not put into practice, the peace of human society cannot be "effectively defended against the forces of revolution."

f) Just Wage. The "propertyless wage earners" must be enabled to "acquire a certain moderate ownership."

g) Wage Contract Not Essentially Unjust. A wage contract according to the principles of justice is not to be condemned. But "in the present state of human society" it is "advisable

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that the wage contract should, when possible, be modified somewhat by a contract of partnership." "In this way wage earners are made sharers in some sort in the ownership, or the management, or the profits." It is false to assert "that the worth of labor and therefore the equitable return to be made for it, should equal the worth of its net result."

h) Individual and Social Character of Labor. In labor as well as in ownership "there is a social as well as a personal or individual aspect to be considered." "Unless . . . brains, capital, and labor combine together for common effort, man's toil cannot produce due fruit." Hence: "the wage paid to the workingman must be sufficient for the support of himself and his family." "It is wrong to abuse the tender years of children or the weakness of woman." "Mothers will above all devote their work to the home." "Intolerable is the abuse whereby mothers of families, because of the insufficiency of the father's salary, are forced to engage in gainful occupations outside the domestic walls to the neglect of their own proper cares and duties, particularly the education of their children." Social justice demands immediate reforms which "guarantee every adult workingman" a wage "to meet adequately ordinary domestic needs."

i) Business and Wages. "It is unjust to demand wages so high that an employer cannot pay them without ruin and without consequent distress amongst the working people themselves." "Let employers . . . and employed join in the plans and efforts to overcome all difficulties . . . and let them be aided . . . by the wise measure of public authority." The "guiding spirit" should be "Christian harmony."

j) Exigencies of the Common Good. "Opportunities for work" must be provided by a proper scale of wages, which has to be arranged according to the demands of the *common good*. Social justice demands that "such a scale of wages be set up, if possible, as to offer to the greatest number opportunities of employment and of securing for themselves suitable means of livelihood."

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H. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SOCIAL ORDER. "Two things are particularly necessary: the reform of the social order and the correction of morals." "The mightily developed social life which once flourished in a variety of prosperous institutions organically linked with each other, has been damaged and all but ruined, leaving thus virtually only individuals and the State. Social life lost entirely its organic form." "It is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise . . . can accomplish . . . it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies." "The true aim of social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy them." "The more a graded hierarchical order exists between the various subsidiary organizations, the more excellent will be both the authority and the efficiency of the social organization as a whole and the . . . more prosperous the condition of the State."

a) *Harmony Between Ranks in Society.* It is the duty "of the State and of all good citizens to abolish conflict between classes . . . and promote harmony." "The aim of social legislation must be the re-establishment of vocational groups." "Society today still remains . . . unstable . . . being founded on classes with contradictory interests." "Labor . . . is not a mere chattel, since the human dignity of the workingman must be recognized in it." Yet on the labor market are two classes which are like "two armies engaged in combat." This opposition must be removed. Vocational groups must be formed. They are, "if not essential to civic society, at least to common good." "Regarding cases in which interests of employers and employees call for special care . . . against opposing interests, separate deliberation will take place in their respective assemblies and separate votes will be taken as the matter may require." Men of the same trade or profession are not only free but have a right to form unions. "The

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same liberty must be claimed for the founding of associations which extend beyond the limits of a single trade" with the purpose to prepare the way for the "ideal type of vocational groups."

According to the latter, both employees and employers in any given trade or industry will be fully organized, and decide through their representatives on their mutual problems, taking into account the interests of the consumer, and never forgetting the laws of justice and charity. The State is to aid and foster these associations, but not to interfere with them. (See Chapter XXX, "The System of Occupational Groups" in Father Husslein's *The Christian Social Manifesto*, Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee.)

b) *Restoration of the True Principles of Economics.* "The proper ordering of economic affairs cannot be left to free competition alone." This is the error of the "individualistic" school which teaches that the "State should refrain in theory and practise from interfering. . . ." Nor can social order be restored by "the economic supremacy which within recent times has taken the place of free competition." Higher principles must be applied to control this supremacy, i.e., the principles of *social justice* and *social charity*. Justice "must build up a juridical and social order able to pervade all economic activity. Social charity should be, as it were, the soul of this order, and the duty of the State will be to protect . . . it effectively." Nations "in common counsel" should "promote a healthy economic co-operation." The new "*syndical and corporative institution*," where the State grants legal recognition, in virtue of which this institution "alone can represent respectively workingmen and employers . . . conclude labor contracts and labor agreements," etc., has its advantages: "peaceful collaboration of the classes, repression of Socialist organization and efforts, the moderating influence of a special ministry." But, in definite cases, there is reason to fear "that the State is substituting itself in the place of private initiative," and that the institution possesses "an excessively bureaucratic

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and political character." "For the true and permanent advantage of the Commonwealth, there is need before and above all else of the blessing of God, and in the second place, of the co-operation of all men of good will"; moreover . . . of the "contribution furnished by men of technical, commercial, and social competence, and more still, by Catholic principles and their application." But above all, there is need of a "reform of morals."

3. MODERN SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND THE "ONLY SALUTARY CURE"

A. ECONOMIC DOMINATION. Free competition, we are told, is dead. "Immense power and despotic domination are concentrated in the hands of a few," who "are frequently not the owners but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their own good pleasure." "This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control the money" supply "the life blood to the entire economic body . . . so that no one dares breathe against their will." This was the result of former free competition. It led to a threefold struggle: (a) the struggle for dictatorship in economics; (b) the struggle for control of the State; (c) the struggle between States. All this led to *disastrous consequences*: "The whole economic life has become hard, cruel, and relentless in a ghastly measure." "The State . . . has become . . . a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed." Two great evils have arisen: (a) "economic nationalism" or "imperialism"; (b) "international imperialism." The only remedy is: application of the "principles of right reason and Christian social philosophy" regarding capital and labor.

B. SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM. Since the time of Leo XIII Socialism has changed from a "single system, which defended certain definite and mutually coherent doctrines" and has divided into "two opposing camps" both in opposition to the Christian faith:

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a) One section of Socialism has degenerated into *Communism*, with its twofold aim: "merciless class warfare and complete abolition of private ownership"; furthermore, bitter hostility against the Church and God. It is a warning that we must remedy present social conditions, which led to this extreme.

b) The moderate section is still called *Socialism*. It "moderates to some extent class warfare and the abolition of private property. But it does not reject it entirely." "It would seem as if Socialism . . . were drifting toward the truth which Christian tradition has always held in respect, for it cannot be denied that its programs often strikingly approach the just demands of Christian social reformers." If "class warfare" changes to "an honest discussion of differences" it "must be an approach toward the mutual co-operation of vocational groups." They no longer attack the "possession of the means of production . . . but that type of social rulership, which, in violation of all justice, has been . . . usurped by the owners of wealth." "This rulership belongs to the State." "Certain forms of property must be reserved to the State." "Just demands and desires of this kind contain nothing opposed to Christian truth." But in spite of that, Christian truth cannot change and "meet Socialism as it were half way." This is "empty hope." On the contrary, Socialism has to accept the whole Christian truth. As things are, "Socialism . . . cannot be brought into harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church" . . . because "it conceives human society in a way utterly alien to Christian truth," by ignoring the "sublime end both of individuals and of society." They have the false view that men must "submit themselves wholly to society with a view to the production of wealth. This implies "compulsion of the most excessive kind" and "fosters a false liberty" without "true social authority . . . which descends from God alone." Hence, "no one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist." The new

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phenomenon of "cultural Socialism" is nothing but Socialism in principle. Even Catholics, have, unfortunately accepted Socialism under the false pretext that the Church neglects the workingman. "We invite them with all possible solicitude to return. . . ."

C. MORAL RENOVATION. "Social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit." "Christianity alone can apply an efficacious remedy for the excessive solicitude for transitory things, which is the origin of all vices."

a) *The Greatest Loss—the Loss of Souls.* "The fundamental cause of the defection from Christian law in social and economic matters . . . is the disorderly affection of the soul, as a sad consequence of original sin." Under the present economic conditions "some have become so hardened against the stings of conscience as to hold all means good which enable them to increase their profits." "The worst injustices and frauds take place beneath the obscurity of the common name of corporative firm." The civil authority has failed to act in the crisis. Besides, "rationalism had already taken firm hold of large numbers, and an economic science alien to the true moral law had soon arisen, whence it followed that free reign was given to human avarice." The morals of workers are exposed to the greatest danger in modern factories, because of "disgraceful housing conditions," and the difficulties "of a proper observance of the holydays." "Dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded."

D. THE REMEDIES:

a) *Inspiration by Christian Principles.* "Men must observe anew the precepts of Him who alone has the words of eternal life." A sound order is impossible in social life "unless all man's activities harmoniously unite to imitate and, as far as is humanly possible, attain the marvelous unity of the divine plan." Remunerative occupations "are hereby not

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belittled." "Those who are engaged in production are not forbidden to increase their fortunes in a lawful and just manner."

b) *The Law of Charity*. "In effecting this reform, charity, which is the bond of perfection, must play the leading part." "Justice . . . can remove indeed the cause of social strife, but can never bring about a union of hearts and minds," which is the "main principle of stability."

c) *Course to Be Followed*. "Undoubtedly the first and immediate apostles of the workingman must themselves be workmen, while the apostles of the industrial and commercial world should themselves be employers and merchants." "All candidates for the sacred priesthood must be adequately prepared to meet it [the difficult task] by intense study of social matters." Social instruction should be given to youth, Christian associations and study circles be founded, spiritual exercises be employed. "No stone . . . must be left unturned to avert these grave misfortunes from human society." "Let, then, all men of good will stand united."

In his Encyclical the Holy Father spoke to the world as the representative of Christ, the Saviour of mankind, in order to give to desperate humanity advice and direction according to the heart of its Redeemer. The miracle of Christ stilling the storm at sea has somehow repeated itself: "Rising up He commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm" (Matt. 8:26). Not that the storm has subsided or the chaos ended. In human society men must co-operate and help themselves under the guidance of higher wisdom. But multitudes all over the globe, even many of those who do not belong to the flock of the supreme shepherd of souls, paused and listened when the Vicar of Christ with keen mind and anguished heart described the tremendous misery especially of the working classes; when he, with admirable insight, discerned the causes of the calamity and with a world vision and foresight recommended the necessary remedies.

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Although the Holy Father throughout the greatest part of the Encyclical is concerned with the material side of the present social disorder and with the practical remedies for it, he always insists on the eternal background of social life and on the *spiritual factors* necessary for any social revival:

First of all he emphasizes the general principle that without the spiritual forces of religion, as contained in Christianity and its Gospel, no social betterment of an effective character can be expected. In the very beginning of the Encyclical he repeats the words of Leo XIII, who, "drew from the Gospel as from a living and life-giving source." "The Church insists on the authority of the Gospel, upon those teachings whereby the conflict can be brought to an end or rendered, at least, far less bitter." "We . . . perceive clearly that this longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit, from which multitudes engaged in industry in every country have unhappily departed. Otherwise, all our endeavors will be futile, and our social edifice will be built not upon a rock but upon shifting sand. . . . Christianity alone can apply an efficacious remedy for the excessive solicitude for transitory things, which is the origin of all evils." Therefore, he invites "all men of good will . . . to play their part in the *Christian renewal* of human society." The world, "which in large measure has almost fallen back into paganism" must be brought *back to Christ*. In various European countries Catholic unions "became instrumental in building up a body of truly Christian workingmen. These happily combined the successful plying of their trade with deep religious convictions. . . . Thus they prepared the way for a Christian renewal of the whole social life." Social reconstruction has, in the words of Leo XIII, to be accomplished "according to the principles of sound philosophy and the sublime precepts of the Gospel." The end will be "more certainly attained . . . by Catholic

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principles and their application." Society cannot be healed "save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions."

Apart from this solemn proclamation of the necessity of Christian principles for social reform in general, the Holy Father points out clearly that for the solution of many particular difficulties and problems of social life, only Christianity holds the key. Here, then, are some of its pertinent thoughts.

1. *The rights of workingmen*: The "sacred rights of the workman . . . proceed from his dignity as a man and a Christian."

2. *The salvation of souls*: The ruin of souls is the greatest disaster. "If we view things with Christian eyes, and we should, what are they [all temporal disasters] in comparison with the ruin of souls? What will it profit men that a more prudent distribution and use of riches make it possible for them to gain even the whole world, if thereby they suffer the loss of their own souls?" "For this pitiable ruin of souls, which, if it continue, will frustrate all efforts to reform society, there can be no other remedy than a frank and sincere return to the teaching of the Gospel."

3. *Society — the body of Christ*. The Encyclical refers twice to the sublime doctrine of St. Paul on the "mystical body" of Christ to which human society should be conformed by its renewal: "If the members of the social body be thus reformed . . . it will be possible to say, in a sense, of this body what the Apostle said of the mystical body of Christ: 'The whole body being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, marketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity' " (Eph. 4:16); again we read that all sections of society "are members of a single family and children of the same heavenly Father . . . one body in Christ and every one members of one another" (1 Cor. 12:27).

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4. *Curbing of selfishness*: "Mere sordid selfishness, which is the disgrace and the great crime of the present age, will be opposed in very deed by the kindly and forcible law of Christian moderation, whereby man is commanded to seek the Kingdom of God and His justice, confiding in God's liberality and definite promise that temporal goods also, insofar as he has need of them, will be added unto him" (Matt. 6:33).

5. *Power of charity*: "Now, in effecting this reform, charity, which is the bond of perfection (Col. 3:14) must play a leading part." "The mutual relations between capital and labor must be determined according to the laws of the strictest justice . . . supported, however, by Christian charity." The Encyclical concludes with the beautiful words of Leo XIII, urging unselfishness and charity for the renewal in Christ: "Let them seek, not themselves and the things that are their own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. Let them not urge their own ideas with undue persistence; but be ready to abandon them, however admirable, should the greater common good seem to require it, that in all and above all Christ may reign and rule."

6. *Dignity of the workingman*. If Christian reform is completed "workingmen . . . will lay aside all feelings of hatred or envy, which the instigators of social strife arouse so skillfully. Not only will they cease to feel weary of the position assigned them by Divine Providence in human society; they will become proud of it, well aware that every man by doing his duty is working usefully and honorably for the common good, and is following in the footsteps of Him, who, 'being in the form of God' (Phil. 2:7), chose to become a carpenter among men, and to be known as the son of a carpenter."

7. *Economics and Christianity*. "Since the present economic regime is based mainly on capital and labor, it follows that the principles of right reason and Christian social philosophy regarding capital, labor, and their mutual co-operation must be accepted in theory and reduced to practice."

8. *Superfluous income and Christianity*. "Man's superfluous

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income is not left entirely to his own discretion. . . . On the contrary, *the gravest obligations of charity*, beneficence, and liberality which rest upon the wealthy are constantly insisted upon in telling words by Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church."

9. *Associations and social doctrine.* There is question here of organizations for the proper inculcation of "Christian social doctrine." "Side by side with trade unions, there must always be associations which aim at giving their members a thorough religious and moral training, that these in turn may impart to the labor unions to which they belong the upright spirit which should direct their entire conduct." The "workingmen's associations . . . must pay special and chief attention to the duties of religion and morality, and . . . social betterment should have this chiefly in view."

10. *Private ownership and Christianity.* "Most helpful, worthy of all praise, are the efforts of those who, in a spirit of harmony and with due regard for the traditions of the Church, seek to determine the precise nature of these duties [of ownership] and to define the boundaries imposed by the requirements of social life upon the right of ownership itself or upon its use."

11. *Socialism and Communism.* They are, "even in their mitigated forms, far removed from the precepts of the Gospel."

12. *Catholic deserters.* "There are even now, some who, while professing the Catholic faith, are well nigh unmindful of that sublime law of justice and charity, which binds us not only to give to each man his due, but succor our brethren as Christ, our Lord Himself. . . . Indeed there are some who can abuse religion itself, cloaking their own unjust imposition under its name that they may protect themselves against the clearly just demands of their employees."

13. *Christ — the highest consolation.* "Let it be their firm persuasion that nowhere, even on earth, can they find an ampler happiness, than in company with Him, who, being

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rich, became poor for our sakes, that through His poverty we might become rich; who was poor and in labor from His youth, who invites to Himself all who labor and are burdened, that He may refresh them bounteously in the love of His heart. Who in fine, without any respect for persons will require more of him to whom more has been given" (Luke 12:48).

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianizing the Social Order* (Macmillan, 1912), p. 28.

² Dawson, Christopher, *The Modern Dilemma* (Sheed and Ward, 1932), p. 107.

³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions* (Macmillan, 1928), p. 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁵ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianizing the Social Order* (Macmillan), p. 125.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁷ Schmitz, H. Joseph, *Die acht Seligkeiten des Christentums und die Versprechungen der Sozialdemokratie*, p. 4.

⁸ All controversies concerning this famous passage are set aside purposely.

⁹ Cf. my book, *Kraft der Urkirche*, p. 31.

¹⁰ Lukan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel* (Macmillan, 1928), p. 184.

¹¹ Cohausz, Otto, S.J., *Mein Volk wach auf*, p. 177 f.

Human society, as the human body, can only prosper if each member has its proper function, "*wenn jedes Organ genau sein Ausmass, seine Stellung hat, wenn alle sich geregelt in den Gesamtorganismus hinein-fügen und dem Ganzen widmen.*" Cf. also Anger, *The Doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ According to the Principles of the Theology of St. Thomas*, trans. by John J. Burke, C.S.P., p. 189 ff.

¹² Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (Sheed, 1933), p. 256.

¹³ Cf. Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie der Arbeits-lehre des Neuen Testaments*, p. 3.

¹⁴ Dausch, Petrus, *Die Drei Ältesten Evangelien*, p. 189.

¹⁵ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 67.

CHAPTER II

¹ Bull, Paul B., *The Economics of the Kingdom of God* (Macmillan, 1927), p. 13.

² Steinmann, Alphons, *Jesus und die Soziale Frage*, p. 121.

³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 34.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (Macmillan), p. 56 f.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Footnotes

- ⁸ *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 49.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96. Cf. also p. 69: "The Life substance of Christian religion was the hope of seeing a divine social order on earth."
- ¹⁰ Fonck, Leopold, S.J., *The Parables of the Gospel*, trans. by E. Leahy (Pustet), p. 67.
- ¹¹ Strack-Billerbeck, *Exkurse zu einzelnen Stellen des Neuen Testamentes*, II, p. 799 ff.
- ¹² Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 4.
- ¹³ Bull, Paul B., *The Economics of the Kingdom of God*, p. 13.
- ¹⁴ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 334.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 334.
- ¹⁶ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 150.
- ¹⁷ Cf. The collection of passages in H. Schumacher, *Kraft der Urkirche*, p. 42 f.
- ¹⁸ Cf. Steinmann, Alphons, *Jesus und die Soziale Frage*, p. 57.
- ¹⁹ Dausch, P., *Die Drei Ältesten Evangelien*, p. 143.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- ²¹ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 67.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- ²³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 39.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 55.
- ²⁵ Cf. Ryan, John A., *Distributive Justice* (Macmillan), Preface.
- ²⁶ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 332.
- ²⁷ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 72 f.
- ²⁸ Dawson, Christopher, *The Modern Dilemma*, p. 52 f.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53 f.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- ³¹ Lukan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 198.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ³³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 71.
- ³⁴ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 149.
- ³⁵ Cf. Dausch, P., *Die Drei Ältesten Evangelien*, p. 131.
- ³⁶ Steinmann, Alphons, *Jesus und die Soziale Frage*, p. 250.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 234.
- ³⁸ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, Vol. I, p. 35.
- ³⁹ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 298.
- ⁴⁰ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, Vol. I, p. 36.

CHAPTER III

- ¹ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 294.
- ² *The Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary*.
- ³ Varvello, Francis, *Metaphysics* (University of San Francisco Press).
- ⁴ Dawson, Christopher, *Progress and Religion, an Historical Enquiry* (Sheed and Ward), p. 189.
- ⁵ Cf. Schumacher, H., *Kraft der Urkirche*.
- ⁶ Lortz, Joseph, *Geschichte der Kirche in ideengeschichtlicher Betrachtung*, p. 20.
- ⁷ Gillis, James, *Christianity's Contribution to Civilization* (Paulist Press), p. 15.

Footnotes

- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ¹⁰ Ryan, John A., *Distributive Justice*, p. 158.
- ¹¹ Lugan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 41.
- ¹² Dausch, Petrus, *Die Drei Ältesten Evangelien*, p. 111.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- ¹⁵ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 272.
- ¹⁶ Kent, Charles F., *The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus* (Scribner's, 1917), p. 198 f.
- ¹⁷ Lugan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 219.
- ¹⁸ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 259.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 261.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 279.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 280.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 281.
- ²³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 85.
- ²⁴ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophet and Jesus*, p. 241.
- ²⁵ Cf. Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, Vol. I, p. 24.
- ²⁶ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 78.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83 f.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ³² Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 271.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 275.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 268.
- ³⁵ Ward, H. F., *Our Economical Morality* (Macmillan), p. 213.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ³⁷ Ratzinger, G., *Die Volkswirtschaft in ihren sittlichen Grundlagen*, p. 288.
- ³⁸ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 181.
- ³⁹ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 2.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ⁴¹ Gillis, James, *Christianity's Contribution to Civilization*, p. 16 f.
- ⁴² Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 89.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- ⁴⁴ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 381.
- ⁴⁵ Adam, Karl, *Christ, Our Brother*, trans. Dom J. McCann, O.S.B. (Macmillan), p. 3.
- ⁴⁶ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 381; cf. also Winterstein, Alfred, *Die Christliche Lehre vom Erdengut*, p. 13 ff.
- ⁴⁷ Husslein, Joseph, S.J., *Bible and Labor* (Macmillan), p. 172.
- ⁴⁸ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, p. 138.
- ⁴⁹ Cohausz, Otto, S.J., *Mein Volk wach auf*, etc., p. 176.
- ⁵⁰ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 228.
- ⁵¹ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 103.
- ⁵² Lunn, Arnold, *Now I See* (Sheed and Ward), p. 58.
- ⁵³ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 328.
- ⁵⁴ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 4.
- ⁵⁵ Adam, Karl, *Christ Our Brother*, p. 16.

Footnotes

- ⁵⁶ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 16.
⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 117.
⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 135.
⁶⁰ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 236.
⁶¹ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 132.
⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 101.
⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.
⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.
⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134.
⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.
⁶⁷ Lugan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 225.
⁶⁸ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophet and Jesus*, p. 237.
⁶⁹ Strack-Billerbeck, *Exkurse zu einzelnen Stellen des Neuen Testamentes*, p. 487.
⁷⁰ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 236 f.
⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 238.
⁷² Strack-Billerbeck, *Exkurse zu einzelnen Stellen*, etc., p. 487.
⁷³ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 135.
⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 134.
⁷⁵ Kent, Charles, F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 237.
Cf. also Strack-Billerbeck, *Exkurse zu einzelnen Stellen*, etc., p. 487.
⁷⁶ Ryan, John A., *Distributive Justice*, p. 359 ff.
⁷⁷ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 111.
⁷⁸ Dawson, Christopher, *The Modern Dilemma*, p. 95.
⁷⁹ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 19.
⁸⁰ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 254.
⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 258.
⁸² Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 110.
⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.
⁸⁴ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 254.
⁸⁵ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 109.
⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.
⁸⁷ Lugan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 12.
⁸⁸ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 108.
⁸⁹ Lugan, Alphonse, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, p. 248.
⁹⁰ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 256.
⁹¹ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 297.
⁹² Kent, Charles F., *Social Teaching of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 260.
⁹³ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, pp. 12, 18.
⁹⁴ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 108.
⁹⁵ Dausch, Petrus, *Die Drei Ältesten Evangelien*, p. 115.

CHAPTER IV

- ¹ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 93.
² Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 290.
³ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 306.
⁴ Schumacher, H., *Kraft der Urkirche*, p. 37.
⁵ Biehlmaier, G., S.J., *Urchristentum und Katholische Kirche*, p. 332.
⁶ Cf. Schumacher, H., *Kraft der Urkirche*, p. 156 ff.

Footnotes

- ⁷ Lortz, Joseph, *Geschichte der Kirche*, etc., p. 22.
⁸ Bull, Paul B., *Economics of the Kingdom of God*, p. 193.
⁹ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 285.
¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 286.
¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.
¹² Debout, Jacques, *My Sins of Omission*, An Average Catholic's Examination of Conscience, trans. by J. F. Scanlan (Herder, St. Louis, 1930), p. 47 f.
¹³ Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*, p. 100.
¹⁴ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 288.
¹⁵ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 120.
¹⁶ Cf. J. Elliot Ross, *Commonweal*, Sept. 13, 1935, p. 458.
¹⁷ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, p. 57.
¹⁸ Jungmann, A., *Zeitschrift für Kath. Theologie*, 1932, p. 603.
¹⁹ Canon 467, § 1.

CHAPTER V

- ¹ Cf. Schumacher, H., *Das Ehe-Ideal des Apostels Paulus*, p. 4 ff.
² Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 296.
³ Schumacher, H., *Das Ehe-Ideal des Apostels Paulus*, p. 123.
⁴ Kent, Charles F., *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus*, p. 297.
⁵ Weber, Simon, *Evangelium und Arbeit, Eine Apologie*, etc., p. 161.
⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 169.
⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 169.
⁸ Benigni, Umberto, *Storia Sociale della Chiesa*, p. 40.

CONCLUSION

- ¹ Dawson, Christopher, *The Modern Dilemma*, p. 110.
² Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 29.
³ Cohausz, Otto, S.J., *Mein Volk wach auf*, p. 42.
⁴ Dawson, Christopher, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*, p. 307.
⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 296 ff.
⁶ Dawson, Christopher, *The Modern Dilemma*, p. 112.
⁷ Roberts, Richard, *The New Man and the Divine Society* (Macmillan), p. 6.
⁸ Debout, Jacques, *My Sins of Omission*, etc., p. 45.
⁹ Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 330.
¹⁰ Dawson, Christopher, *Progress and Religion, an Historical Enquiry*, p. 157.
¹¹ Maritain, Jacques, *The Things That Are Not Caesar's*, etc. (Scribner's), p. 80.
¹² *Ibid.*, p. 119.
¹³ *Literary Digest* (January 20, 1934), p. 15.
¹⁴ Ross, E. J., *A Survey of Sociology*, p. 513.
¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 513.
¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 515.
¹⁷ Garriguet, Abbé Léon, *The Gospel and Our Social Problems*, p. 61.

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